

John W. Wynn Chadwell

LECTURES

Ex dono Herringham

ON THE 1790

EXERCISE

OF THE

SACRED MINISTRY.

By the late J. F. OSTERVOLD,

PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY, AND PASTOR OF THE CHURCH
OF NEUFCHATEL IN SWISSERLAND.

Translated from the FRENCH,

AND ENLARGED

With a PREFACE, and OCCASIONAL NOTES,

By THOMAS STEVENS, M. A.

VICAR OF BUMPSTED-HELION, ESSEX; LATE FELLOW
OF TRINITY-COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; AND ONE OF
HIS MAJESTY'S PREACHERS AT WHITEHALL.

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M DCC LXXXI.



TO
THE YOUNGER CLERGY
AND
CANDIDATES FOR HOLY ORDERS
THE FOLLOWING
LECTURES,
TRANSLATED FOR THEIR USE,
ARE AFFECTIONATELY RECOMMENDED
AND INSCRIBED,
BY
THEIR HUMBLE SERVANT,
THOMAS STEVENS.



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T H E

F R E N C H E D I T O R ' s

P R E F A C E.

THIS Work of Mr. OSTERVOLD is the most complete that has hitherto appeared on the *sacred ministry*. Many of those, which have been published in our language*, are certainly deserving of the attention of preachers; but those works treat of nothing but *preaching*; this treats of other things besides, as of the *instruction of youth* † in the first part, and all the *second* part is employed on the *government of the church*, on which we have so little assistance from books. With this a young minister, called to serve a church, enters on his laborious task, informed of every thing he should know relative to all the functions of

* *Essay on the Composition of a Sermon*, by Mr. CLAUDE. *Christian Eloquence* by F. GISBERT, which may serve as a model for eloquence. The *Evangelical Pastor* of Mr. ROQUES; and the *Advice* of Mr. LA PLACETTE, on the manner of preaching.

† In which it has also the advantage over others.

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his office, without waiting to be instructed in them by a long fatiguing experience. *But*, it will be said, *this part of our Author's work principally regards the government of the churches in Swisserland.* That is very true. But, still, will not any minister, actuated by a noble curiosity, be highly pleased at learning how churches are governed in other places? Who knows too, whether he may not from hence find matter for reformation in his own church.

Non omnia noscimus omnes.

Besides, how many things are there in this part, adapted to all times and all places? This will readily appear from the perusal of it. In short, I perceive a more general utility, and such as extends even to private persons. Is there, for instance, any law either of the gospel, or ecclesiastical discipline, that prohibits them from visiting the sick and conversing with them according to their condition. They will here learn how they are to conduct themselves in that point. I am aware there are many persons who would resent such an undertaking from their equals. Sometimes they would scarcely suffer, with patience, even a pastor to perform this office with them, and they would gladly avoid it, did they not fear *what the world would say of it*, or did not their relations fear it for them. What I have said of the sick, may with equal reason be applied to the lewd, the profane, and other
vicious

vicious persons mentioned in this part of the work, whose correction is more immediately committed to pastors; which we should greatly promote, if we discharged our duty in these respects, as the gospel expressly exhorts us to it. We should likewise become less corrupt ourselves. The charitable attention, we should pay to the faults of others, would render us more circumspect about our own. But I return to Mr. OSTERVOLD. We find, in all his works, a solidity of thought, that convinces the understanding, and a piety that would inspire those who are destitute of it. Actuated by a christian jealousy in the discharge of his office, he does not employ himself, as he might, on subjects of mere curiosity, or such as are adapted only to readers familiarized to *abstract ideas*, which are often of very little use, and which should ever be banished from sermons, especially from such as are preached. Being justly persuaded, that such an employment of his talents would be straying from the true end of his vocation, he has composed none but religious works, and has written them in a style intelligible to all readers. May heaven yet long preserve so worthy a pastor! We shall one day see with edification and gratitude, in his funeral elogy, this list of his works, *Sermons, Catechism, Treatise on the causes of corruption, of Unclean-ness, Arguments, and Reflections on all the chapters of the Bible; and lastly the Exercise of the*
2 4 *sacred*

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sacred ministry. Whether Mr. OSTERVALD has published any other works I know not; those of this kind cannot be multiplied enough. This, which he dictated to his pupils, is deserving of a good summary of the principal subjects, and therefore I have endeavoured to make one.

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T H E

T H E

T R A N S L A T O R ' s

P R E F A C E.

I Flatter myself the reader will excuse me, if I add something, by way of preface, on the character and writings of Mr. OSTERVOLD. I have been long desirous of collecting a more ample and complete account of this great and good man, but have met with very few materials for that purpose; tho' I have had recourse to several *biographical* authors, and to some very learned and respectable friends, that were most likely to assist me in the undertaking. It is hoped, however, the reader will not be displeased with the principal information I have been able to procure concerning the descent, education, character, and writings of our illustrious author.

“ HE was descended from a noble and ancient family, and born at *Neufchatel* in 1663. He made such a rapid progress in learning, that he was admitted *Master of Arts* at *Saumur* before he was 16. He afterwards studied at *Orleans* under

under Mr. PAJON, and at Paris under ALLIX. On his return to his native country he was made pastor at Neufchatel in 1699. He then formed an intimate friendship with the celebrated JOHN ALPHONSO TURRETIN of *Geneva*, and two years after with the illustrious SAMUEL WERENFELS of *Bâle*; and the union of these three divines, which was called the *Triumvirate of Swiss Divines*, continued till their death. Mr. OSTERVALD acquired the highest reputation by his talents, his virtues, and his zeal for training up pupils, and reviving *ecclesiastical discipline*. He made several pious establishments, and died in 1747 universally regretted by his acquaintance."

For these anecdotes we are indebted to a French * biographer, of the *Romish* communion, and therefore his high character of Mr. OSTERVALD cannot be thought partial or insincere. He speaks of a great number of our author's works, as highly esteemed by protestants, and some of them as much esteemed by himself. He has enumerated the *eight* following, as the *principal*, and, so far as I can learn, they are the *whole* of them.

1. *A Treatise on the Causes of Corruption amongst Christians.*

2. *A Catechism, or Instruction in the Christian Religion.*

3. *A Treatise against Uncleaness.*

* L' Abbé ADVOCAT, author of a small *Biographical Dictionary*, in two vols.

4. *An edition of the French Bible of Geneva, with arguments and reflections.*

5. *Sermons.*

6. *Ethica Christiana.*

7. *Theologiæ Compendium.*

8. *A Treatise on the Sacred Ministry.*

This biographer informs us, that the *three* last of these works were collected from our Author's Lectures, and printed without his knowledge; but this circumstance (as he assures us) has not prevented their being esteemed.

If Mr. Ostervald's religious conduct and writings gained him so much applause from a person of the Romish communion, we cannot be surprized to find, that he has shone with distinguished lustre in the eyes of the most learned and judicious protestants throughout *Europe*.

About the close of the last century he published his celebrated *Treatise on the Causes of Corruption amongst Christians*, to which he frequently refers his pupils in the following lectures. There is reason to think *that treatise* one of his earliest, as well as boldest publications. It touches on a variety of nice and tender subjects. It lays open the prevailing corruptions of his age and country, points out some capital faults in many academies and universities of Europe, and condemns the misconduct of persons in different ranks and professions of life, more especially of those employed in the sacred ministry. Yet the extensive knowledge and solid judgment, united with the pious zeal and ingenuous freedom, displayed in that performance,

formance, gained it so great and general an applause in *French*, that, we are told, a second edition of it was desired in less than two months after the first. It was soon translated into several languages, and into our own, by the particular encouragement of Bishop BURNET, who esteemed it one of the best books that age had produced.

Soon after the fame of this treatise was spread in the world, the illustrious SOCIETY for *promoting Christian Knowledge* was established in *London*. In that Society were many persons of the first rank and abilities both in church and state, who soon conceived so high an esteem for Mr. Ostervald, for his excellence as a writer, and for the particular respect he had shewn to the *English Liturgy*, that they did him the honour to elect him one of their members. They likewise set on foot a correspondence with the church of *Neufchatel*, and the other *protestant* churches in *Switzerland*.

To that Society our Author soon after dedicated his *excellent Catechism* *, with the warmest expressions of respect, in return for the favours they had conferred on himself and his country. In this catechism he taxes the generality of ministers with remissness in the instruction, and management of their flocks; yet was it printed with the express approbation of the *dean* and *pastors* of the churches of the sovereignty of *Neufchatel* and *Valangin*, who had

* This Catechism, containing near 400 pages, neatly bound, may be had by any members of the Society, price 10 d.

deputed

deputed several members of their community to examine it. This catechetical treatise soon met with such high esteem, as to be translated into *German* and *Dutch*, as well as *English*. The learned and pious Dean STANHOPE revised Mr. Wanley's translation of it, by the particular request of the Society; at whose expence the Abridgment of the History of the Bible, which is prefixed to it, was translated, and printed in *Arabic*, to be sent to the *East-Indies*.

Soon after this period, there arose a very warm dispute at *Neufchatel*, about the succession to the sovereignty of that state. The King of *Prussia* put in his claim against several other candidates; and, on his engaging most solemnly to advance both religion and learning in that state, he prevailed with several of our bishops, and particularly Bishop *Burnet*, to use their best endeavours to promote his pretensions. For this purpose they wrote, in the most effectual manner they could, to Mr. OSTERVALD, as a person of the best conduct and influence, to procure their claimant the success he wished for, and soon after met with. On this occasion, Bishop *Burnet* represents our Author "as the most eminent ecclesiastick of that state, and one of the best, and most judicious divines of the age;" and then observes, "he was bringing that church to a near agreement with our forms of worship *."

* See BURNET's History of his own Times, Vol. IV. page 200, 201. Edit. 8vo. 1753.

I have cited this anecdote as much for the credit of our established church, as for the honour of Mr. Ostervald; and have introduced it here, because his Catechetical Treatise, just mentioned, furnishes an agreeable confirmation of the Bishop's remark on the high esteem our Author entertained for our excellent liturgy. For, at the end of that treatise, he has printed a form of prayer for Saturday evening, established in his church of Neufchatel, in 1702, which is borrowed chiefly from our liturgy, and is, in many parts, the same word for word.

Mr. Ostervald was peculiarly happy in his early and intimate acquaintance with the ancient ecclesiastical historians; and we find him very earnest in recommending that study to others, from which he had acquired so much valuable knowledge himself. That knowledge, united to a penetrating genius and solid judgment, rendered him far more free than modern divines usually are, from the common influence of prejudice and bigotry. That taught him to pity the ignorance and the narrow-mindedness of those zealots, who are too ready to condemn, and vilify as an absurdity or innovation, whatever happens not to agree with the manners of their own country, or the custom of their own church.

Our author was neither educated nor ordained in an *episcopal* church; and yet he frequently speaks with respect of the office and authority of *bishops* in the primitive times; and blames a writer of his own community for his invectives

tives against episcopacy *. He saw and lamented many faults and defects in the churches of *Switzerland*; he commended and adopted, as much as he could, several excellencies which he discerned in those of other countries. He was not only a warm admirer of our forms of prayer, but also a strenuous advocate for the solemn rite of *confirmation*, which has been practised in our church from her first establishment. In his *Treatise on the Causes of Corruption* he strongly vindicates both the usefulness and antiquity of this rite; he observes, that an order

* What a grievous torrent of invectives hath been lately poured forth against *Episcopacy*, by Mr. Robinson, a dissenting preacher at Cambridge, in a small pamphlet on the Principles of Nonconformity?—He condemns episcopacy as the source of the worst evils; what wonder? If he says true, “It generates infidelity and immorality, and is not upheld by argument, reason, scripture, &c. &c.” yet (it seems) the reformed churches abroad, that are not themselves *episcopal*, have acknowledged its excellence. He likewise condemns our liturgy in the severest terms; and what wonder? If he says true, “It is a defective book in every point of view.—It has errors of every kind, literary, philosophical, philological, theological.—It burlesques the very scriptures, by turning them into question and answer, &c. &c.” Yet *this* is the very liturgy that was so much esteemed and copied by the great and good Mr. OSTERVOLD.—I seek no quarrel or controversy with Mr. Robinson. I know his parts and learning, and *once* esteemed him highly for his *pastoral* and *domestic* character. It has, therefore, surprized and grieved me the more to see him disgracing his pen and religion by illiberal sarcasms, and coarse virulent invectives against our *episcopal church*, her clergy, and advocates: The *first* he taxes “with teaching *falsehoods*,” and the *latter* with asserting “a *bold and impudent falsehood*!” To these, and many more of his accusations equally candid and true, I shall make only this reply:—That I have been taught “*not to render evil for evil, or railing for railing*;” and I find, that “*Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil, durst not bring, even against him, a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*”

of

of this kind had been lately adopted with singular success, in some other churches, and, therefore, with the greater zeal and confidence he recommends it to the observance of his own, as "an imitation of the ancient, and apostolical order, and for the special use and edification of young people before their admission to the holy sacrament." His pious recommendation was soon crowned with success. For, we find, a few years after, an order of this kind was adopted by the churches of the principality of *Neufchatel* and *Valangin*; and, in the preface to his catechism, our author speaks, with particular satisfaction, of the benefit and edification those churches had, for several years, experienced from the religious observance of it; and likewise, at the end of it, he has printed the form, or manner of receiving *catechumens* in those churches, which is somewhat similar to our *office for confirmation* *.

I cannot reflect, without peculiar pleasure, on Mr. Ostervald's sentiments and conduct in

* Whether those *Swiss* churches adopted the primitive custom of *laying on of hands*, I am uncertain; but, (according to some credible accounts) it was restored some time since in the church of *Geneva*; and, archbishop *Secker* observes, "this custom is approved, as apostolical, both by *Luther* and *Calvin*, and several of their followers; though they rashly abolished it, as having been abused." See his *Sermon on Confirmation*, annexed to his *Lectures on the Catechism*; and his *Charges*, p. 55. See also Dr. *Nichols's* *Defence of the Church of England*, part II. chap. 7. The ceremony of *laying on of hands* is not a popish practice in this rite, but is now totally disused in the *Roman Church*, though they pretend to make another sacrament of confirmation. See *Bingham's Antiquities of the Christian Church*, b. xii. chap. 3. sect. 6.

these points; and I am willing to hope it will afford the most cordial satisfaction to all true members of our established church to find, that her forms of prayer and religious rites, were so highly esteemed, and closely copied by such a learned, judicious, unprejudiced divine of another country. How happy would it be, if the pastors of all other protestant communities (especially of those in our own country) were disposed to shew the same kind regard and spirit of conformity to the church of England? What glorious lustre, what inexpressible strength and advantage would the *protestant* religion derive from such a general harmony and agreement amongst its professors?

I am led to pursue these reflections somewhat farther by a passage in the learned Dr. Nichols's defence * of the church of England.

“ What a joy (says he) would it bring to
 “ all christian hearts, that they might have
 “ an opportunity, in whatsoever country they
 “ should happen to be, of offering up their
 “ prayers to God with one mouth, and with
 “ one form of devotion? Nor can any thing
 “ be better suited to that purpose than the
 “ Liturgy of the Church of England, which
 “ is certainly the most perfect of any form of
 “ prayer which is extant †. This, by the care
 “ of

* See the English edition, printed in 1715, p. 150.

† Bishop Burnet thought our Liturgy might be rendered still more perfect and unexceptionable, and yet has declared, that
 “ our worship is the perfectest composition of devotion, that we find in any church, ancient or modern.” History of his own Times,

“ of the learned Mr. Ostervald, is already settled in some churches beyond sea; which if it could be established with the same ease in the rest of the protestant churches, nothing could fall out more fortunate for the interest of the protestant cause.”

But, alas! after all the pious wishes and strenuous endeavours of such learned and good men, as Dr. NICHOLS and Mr. OSTERVALD, to promote peace and unity amongst protestants, we are still far, very far, from enjoying those invaluable blessings. Still is it the unhappy lot of our established church, to dwell amongst them that are enemies unto peace; yet abroad she is not without honour, so much as in her own country: according to a very credible account*, the reformed churches say, “ That they look upon the church of England not only as a sister, but as an elder sister, for whom they have a kindness, ac-

Times, vol. iv. p. 410. And as eminent a Nonconformist as ever was, Mr. Baxter, hath long since owned, that almost every church on earth hath a worse Liturgy than ours. Archbishop Secker's Sermons, vol. vi. p. 158. “ In the opinion of the most impartial and excellent Grotius, (who was no member of, nor had any obligation to this church) the English Liturgy comes so near the primitive pattern, that none of the reformed churches can compare with it.” “ All foreign reformed churches admire it, and blame such as dissent from it.” Dr. Comber's preface to his Discourses on the Common Prayer.

* I venture to call this *A very credible account*, because it is given by a dissenting minister, in a small quarto pamphlet, that seems to have been written with the most laudable intention of promoting peace: it was printed, a few years since, by Fletcher and Hodson, at Cambridge, and is entitled, “ AN ATTEMPT to state in a short, plain, and impartial manner, the principal arguments, which have been used in the controversy betwixt the church of England and protestant dissenters.”

“ companied with veneration. They acknow-
 “ ledge episcopacy to have most important ad-
 “ vantages, which cannot be found in pres-
 “ byterian government, and declare the church
 “ of England the most eminent amongst the
 “ reformed.”

Thus has she been loved, esteemed, and ho-
 noured by Mr. Ostervald and several reform-
 ed churches abroad ; but it grieves me to
 think, how she has been, and still is, hated,
 despised, and vilified, by many * of our dissent-
 ing ministers, and communities at home. How
 zealous have some of their divines lately been
 in reviving *old*, or inventing (as much as pos-
 sible) *new* accusations against her : alas ! why
 do they take such needless pains to *widen* that
 unhappy breach between them and us, which
 all wise and good men would be glad to lessen ?
 but I return to a more pleasing subject, the
 conduct and writings of our illustrious author.

Notwithstanding we find his zeal and talents
 sometimes exerted in promoting considerable
 improvements in *christian worship*, and some-

* Far be it from me to pass an indiscriminate censure on *all*
 our dissenting ministers. Though too many of them, of different
 sects, are observed to breathe a spirit of enmity and contempt,
 both against each other and the episcopal clergy ; yet all are not
 of that narrow, ungenerous, and unchristian spirit. I am far
 from thinking none of them are inclined to a respectful behavi-
 our, and amicable agreement, to the established church. There
 are many such, I doubt not, throughout the kingdom. I know,
 at least, *one such*, as respectable for his piety, as his years ; and
 esteem myself happy in his acquaintance. Were all other dissenting
 ministers, like him, possessed of modesty, candour, and good man-
 ners, there would soon be very little difference, and still less en-
 mity, prevailing amongst us.

times in explaining, or vindicating the fundamental articles of the *christian faith*; yet were they by no means confined to those points. He always felt the deepest concern for the interests of *christian morality*; has delineated its various duties with much precision, and inculcated them with great warmth and energy of language, in several parts of his works. He was particularly solicitous to check the progress of any vice or corruption, that he observed most predominant in his parish, or the neighbourhood around him. It was this pious solicitude, that induced him to publish a *discourse*, in *two* parts, on *two* very difficult subjects, *uncleanness* and *chastity*; on which, (as *L'Abbé ADVOCAT* justly observes) he has written "*with exactness*, and great discretion." There are various kinds and degrees of vicious indulgence, all repugnant to christian purity, and too often terminating in the grossest violations of it; and yet they cannot be decently enumerated, much less discussed with minuteness and precision from the pulpit. A preacher of modesty and discretion can do nothing more than throw out some distant hints, some general, vague, and consequently imperfect instructions on these subjects. To treat them even from the press, with exactness, delicacy, and discretion, is a matter of great difficulty. This Mr. OSTERVOLD, with all his talents, ingenuously acknowledges; and this, he assures us, had long retarded his publication; this too he justly considers, as the principal

principal reason why so few tracts have been written to warn and reclaim men from the dangerous indulgence of unchaste desires and corrupt practices, whilst such plenty of wicked books (and we may add shameful *prints*) have been sent abroad into the world to inflame and promote them. At length, however, his ardent zeal for virtue and religion broke through every difficulty and scruple; and he published this exact and judicious discourse, which deserves the peculiar attention of all those who profess christianity, and yet are in imminent danger of falling short of that purity of heart and holiness of life, which are essential to qualify them for the greatest of all blessings, the favour and presence of God in heaven. An English translation of this discourse was published in one small octavo volume in the year 1708, to which the translator has prefixed a very solid and useful preface*.

Many years after this, our author favoured the world with his most considerable, and va-

* In this preface (p. xii, xiii.) and the Discourse (p. 11, 12.) there occur a few plain arguments against *polygamy*, sufficient to prove its inconsistency, both with the order of nature and the precepts of christianity. How astonishing is it to see a once admired preacher of the gospel now standing forth as a public advocate for this *licentious indulgence*, which many a heathen moralist has severely censured. That such indulgence was thought highly unbecoming and injurious in a heathen king, we learn from that beautiful instructive oration of ISOCRATES, entitled, NICOCLES. *Polygamy* is mentioned in several parts of CICERO's writings, no where, that I can find, with the least approbation; but as a *licentious practice*, chiefly prevailing in *barbarous nations*; how little this was indulged, and how much less approved, amongst the *Romans*, see the testimonies cited in BINGHAM's *Antiquities*, b. xvi. chap. 11. sect. 5.

luable work, which has been published in English, under the title of "Arguments and Reflections on the chapters of the Old and New Testament." Mr. Ostervald was about the meridian of life, when he first engaged in this work, which he designed only for the particular use of the churches of Neufchatel, without any thoughts of making it public. But he enjoyed the peculiar satisfaction of seeing its bulk and excellence gradually improving under his own hands, and the esteem and fame of it spreading in the world for above thirty years. His first labours in this way consisted only of arguments and reflections on those chapters of the Old and New Testament, that were appointed to be read as a regular part of the public worship. Several copies of these were soon dispersed, and, in the year 1716, an English translation of them was procured and published by the SOCIETY in LONDON. By this unexpected circumstance our author was induced, contrary to his original intention, to publish the work in French in the year 1720.

A few years after, the churches in *Holland* were so strongly convinced of the utility and excellence of this work of our author, that they came to the resolution of printing the Bible with *his arguments*, and *reflections*, to each chapter; that, when the sacred writings were read, the arguments and reflections might be more conveniently read with them: on this occasion they applied to Mr. Ostervald, and requested him to make some alterations in
his

his work, that would render it more commodious for their plan; to which he readily consented, and they printed a beautiful edition of the Bible, at *Amsterdam*, in 1724.

In the course of twenty years the copies of this Bible became so exceedingly scarce, that it was thought expedient to print a new edition of it at *Neufchatel*. It was on this occasion, that our venerable author, now upwards of fourscore, chearfully employed his last labours on this valuable work; revised the whole, made several improvements, and even added arguments and reflections on a number of chapters, which had none before, because not read in the public service. His work, thus finally completed, was published in 1744, about three years before our author's death.

To this edition of his Bible he prefixed a most excellent *preliminary discourse*, containing many judicious observations on the different books of scripture, and useful directions for reading them to the greatest advantage and improvement. From this last edition, the *preliminary discourse* with the *arguments* and *reflections* were translated, some years since, by a member of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, and printed in three volumes octavo *.

When our author, by the exertion of his great talents and influence, first procured the

* Through the encouragement of that *society* this work has passed through several editions; and, about a year ago, a new edition of it was printed in two large volumes octavo.

establishment of a Liturgy in the churches of *Neufchatel*, one principal design of that Liturgy was to make the reading of the holy scriptures a regular part of the public worship. This practice appeared to him of such evident usefulness, and of such antiquity, both in the *Jewish*, and the *Christian* church *, that he expresses the utmost astonishment, that any set of men, pretending to be christians, could, for so many years, have forgotten or neglected it. But, at the same time, he foresaw how little benefit many illiterate hearers in christian congregations would derive from several chapters of the Bible that were read to them, unless they had some assistance to point out the design and meaning, as well as the use and improvement, that were to be made of them. It was this consideration, that first engaged him to draw up arguments and reflections on such chapters as were appointed to be read in their churches; and if there were the same consent, and *public authority*, for adopting his work, (or some other of the like nature) to the same effect, in *our* churches, as in those of *Holland*, would it not be found extremely beneficial to our people, especially in all the country congregations throughout the kingdom †? I have reason to think, if such a custom

* See the antiquity of this practice asserted, and proved, in Mr. WOGAN's introduction to his *essay* on the proper lessons; or, in WHEATLEY on the *Common Prayer*; and more fully in BINGHAM's *Antiquities of the Christian Church*, b. xiv. ch. 3.

† A learned and valuable writer of our church has long since expressed

tom were *duly authorized*, it would be highly agreeable to many of our most respectable and pious clergy. Indeed, some few ministers of great seriousness and zeal have indulged themselves in the practice of making short occasional remarks on the design and use of the lessons they read, frequently, I doubt not, with the best intentions, though not with the best authority; but their practice is subject to disagreeable consequences, on account of its singularity, and therefore many clergymen, of great judgment and piety, think it neither decent nor safe, in the public exercise of their office, to venture on such innovations unauthorized. To those, however, of the younger clergy, who are determined to persist in this practice, in spite of its singularity, or any imputation they may incur from it, I would earnestly recommend this work of our author; it will furnish them with many of the most pertinent remarks that can be made on the portions of the scripture they read to their congregations. It would also be of admirable use to such private persons or families, in the middle and lower ranks of life, as are desirous of reading the sacred writings with understanding and edification; and is certainly one of

expressed his wishes, that some *short marginal annotations* on the Bible, or, at least, some short expositions of those chapters only, which are read as proper lessons out of the *Old Testament*, were published, for the use of vulgar capacities and ordinary readers. See BINGHAM's preface to the last volume of his *Antiquities*, near the end.

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the *best*, and *cheapest* books, that can be met with for their purpose.

Besides these four works of Mr. Ostervald, on which I have expatiated, I have been so unfortunate, as to meet with only one more, and that is the following *Lectures* on the sacred ministry: I could never hear of any translation of them, nor ever meet with more than one copy of the *French original*, which was printed at *Amsterdam* in 1737, about ten years before our author's death; and accidentally fell in my way many years ago, when I resided at Cambridge. I was led to purchase it, partly by the author's name, but chiefly for the great importance of the subject, on which there were no public instructions given in the university. It has often grieved me to think, how much this unhappy defect in our system of academic education has contributed to the disgrace of the sacred ministry, and the injury of religion. On this account, our universities have been censured by bishop Burnet, dean Prideaux, and many other eminent persons, both in the last and present century, with as much severity, as some of the foreign academies and universities are by professor Ostervald in the following *Lectures*, and his treatise on the *Causes of Corruption* amongst christians, part II. sect. III. Indeed, for some time past, these censures have generally fallen on our university of *Cambridge* much heavier than on that of *Oxford*, where public lectures in divinity have, for the last *fifteen* years, been given *gratis*, to
large

large numbers of students, from *three* to *seven* years standing, by the late diligent professor Dr. BENTHAM, and his learned ingenious successor Dr. WHEELER *.

It has been already observed, that Mr. Oftervald was eminent for his zeal in training up pupils, and I hope these Lectures will be esteemed a sufficient proof of the professor's abilities, as well as zeal in that arduous and important province: but as they were not prepared, nor, perhaps, intended, by himself for the press, to which they were committed without his knowledge, probably by some assiduous pupil who attended them, they are entitled to a more candid allowance for any imperfections that occur in them. We must not expect all that neatness and accuracy of stile or method, which they would, doubtless, have possessed, had they been finished for the press by the professor himself: there seem, however, sufficient strokes of his masterly judgment, and pious zeal, to render the work truly valuable; and I am willing to hope it will prove a very acceptable and useful performance to those gentle-

* How happy is it that our *University of Cambridge* does, at length, enjoy a similar advantage from the late establishment of public lectures in divinity, especially as they are given by a professor of such experienced talents, and zeal, as Dr. HAY. Hence may we hope to see all the students of proper standing soon encouraged to exert the same diligence and emulation, in the sacred science of *divinity*, which has lately been encouraged in the inferior, though useful, study of *ethics*. Hence too may we hope, there will be no more ground for that *severe censure* on either of our universities, which was lately thrown out by a sarcastic writer, *indiscriminately* on them both. *Divinity is no science at universities; classics and mathematics, are all in all.*

men, for whose service I have been encouraged to translate it; our younger clergy, and candidates for orders, especially those of the UNIVERSITY of CAMBRIDGE; for many of whom I have a personal esteem and affection, and for whose honour and success in the sacred ministry I cannot but feel myself particularly interested. As Mr. Ostervald has cited many passages in Latin, without giving any translation of them to his pupils, it seemed needless and impertinent, to translate them for those gentlemen, whom I wish to peruse them: most of them are clear and easy, and some, especially of those cited from good old ERASMUS, possess such force and elegance in the original Latin, that I could not hope to convey their genuine beauty in an English translation.

To render these Lectures more useful, I have made some addition by way of notes; and I am under apprehensions, this part of the work will be most liable to censure and exception. Some readers may be apt to think, that I might, and therefore *should*, have given large and useful remarks on many passages, where I have made none: others may condemn some of the few I have made, as faulty, partial, or, perhaps, superfluous. As to the *scantiness* of the notes, it would, I own, have been very easy to have found an ample remedy, especially if I had been furnished with a large store of authors to consult, cite, and refer to; but then many readers might have thought the remedy too dear a purchase. I could have cited
 nume-

numerous remarks that are entirely unnoticed, transcribed at length many others to which I have only referred, and given a *long* dissertation on several passages, where I have made only a short note. Thus could I easily have swelled the work into one or two bulky and expensive octavos, or even pompous quartos: but then, I am persuaded, many would have severely blamed the redundancy of the notes, and heartily wished the work reduced to its present frugal size; to which I have studiously confined it, for the convenience of many young curates, and other clergymen, to whose leisure and incomes large and costly volumes are very ill adapted. As to the notes I have inserted, some of them were absolutely necessary, and I would hope that all, or most of the others, will appear just, pertinent, and useful to the candid, unprejudiced reader; and as to others, I must be content to bear their censure and resentment. If, however, there be found any material dangerous error, in any part of the work, I shall be extremely glad to see it pointed out, especially if it be done in the spirit of candour and friendship.

In short, if these Lectures, which have been very useful to me, shall be found of any considerable benefit to those for whom they have been chiefly translated, I shall think myself exceedingly happy: or, should I only be well-informed, that they have excited one clergyman to a proper zeal, diligence, and discretion in the discharge of his various duties, or assisted
any

xxx THE TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

any candidate for orders in forming a just, exalted idea of the sacred office to which he aspires, and made him duly careful and conscientious in his preparation * for it, I should feel a pleasure that would amply recompense me for all the time and pains I have bestowed upon them.

* I would recommend to every candidate for orders an attentive perusal of the two following publications.

1. *Directions for young Students in Divinity*, by Dr. OWEN. This small, and useful tract, may be had by any member of the Society in London. Price 6d.

2. *The Archdeacon's Examination of Candidates for Holy Orders*, by Dr. ALBERT GEORGE, 12mo. Price 3s. 6d.

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LECTURE I.

S E C T. I.

INTRODUCTION, DESIGN, AND OCCASION
OF THESE LECTURES.

SINCE, by the Providence of God, a sufficient number of you are met together here, I am come to a resolution of giving you some Lectures during the winter.

The end which I propose in these Lectures, is to give you a just idea of the sacred ministry, and the manner of exercising it. Two reasons have determined me to the choice of this subject.—I. The necessity and importance of it. It is necessary that he who aspires to any office, should be acquainted with the duties of it. Of all that can be done for the glory of God, nothing is more important than training up young people, who are candidates for the ministry. It is very proper also to excite them to piety and diligence; for, if students were acquainted with the nature of the sacred ministry, its weight, its duties, &c. they would be better, and more

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assiduous

assiduous than they usually are. My *Second* reason is, That it is here a subject but little known, and on which we have no instructions. We have no book which treats of it in its whole necessary extent; common-places speak but very superficially about it: there are no instructions given upon this subject in our academies: it is, however, the first, and principal thing that should be attended to. What is still worse, they often give *imperfect*, and sometimes *false* ideas of the sacred ministry. They form young students *merely* for preaching, and make them study common-place.

Moreover, besides their not teaching oftentimes either the true manner of preaching, or sound theology, they say nothing about the various functions of discipline, of the instruction of children, of visiting the sick, &c. In short, they do not consider, and apply things in a *practical* view.

Hence it is, that a young man enters upon the ministry a perfect novice, without knowing what business he is called to; and hence in our consistories, in his attendance on the sick, in the examination of children, and in general in his management of a flock, he is embarrassed, acts at random, and grows old before he acquires any considerable degree of practical skill. The greatest evil of all is, that he does not discharge his conscience well, nor promote his own salvation.

The PLAN I have formed to myself on my subject, is *this*. I shall make some *preliminary* remarks

remarks on *three* things which are absolutely necessary to candidates for the sacred ministry, and without which my labour *will* be useless; these *three* things are *Piety*, *Natural Gifts*, and *Diligence*.

I shall come afterwards to the subject itself; and as the ministry consists of two functions—namely, preaching, and the government of the church, I shall treat of both these points.

I. With respect to preaching: after making some reflections on preaching in general—on the necessity there is of giving you some precepts on this subject, and on the means and assistances you may avail yourselves of for the attainment of this art, I shall speak to you first of *Sermons*, and then of *Catechisms*.

As to Sermons—I shall point out to you the *end* which you ought to propose in them, and the proper choice of subjects and texts. I shall then shew you that there are two sorts of sermons, the one adapted to the explication of holy scripture, the other to the treating of particular points of doctrine or morality.

On these two sorts of Sermons, I shall make some general reflections respecting the manner of composing them. I shall speak of invention—disposition—exactness—clearness—simplicity—order—style—eloquence—the means of making an audience attentive, and of some other articles. I shall also say something on the delivery of Sermons; on the time that ought to be spent in composing them, and their length. I shall then proceed to some particular rules for

the different sorts of Sermons; and *first*, for those in which scripture is explained; the different kinds of which I shall examine into, as texts of history, prophecy, morality, &c. *Then* for those which treat of particular subjects, and for occasional Sermons.

I shall afterwards speak of the parts of a discourse—of the exordium—the connexion, the divisions, the discussion—and above all of the application.

With respect to *Catechisms*, after having distinguished the different sorts of them, I shall shew what matters ought to be treated in them—the manner of treating them—their end, and use. I shall also speak of the method of instructing, and examining young children in particular.

II. The other function of the ministry, is the government of the church. I shall first treat of the general discipline of the church, which is exercised by pastors and consistories; and I must shew you what are the laws of discipline, and how those laws ought to be observed. Here I shall enter into a particular account of the method of proceeding in our consistories, in the various cases which occur there.

I shall afterwards come to private discipline, which is almost totally unknown. Thus I call the care which a pastor ought to take in his own private capacity. That care regards either the church in general, or certain persons in particular.

That

That which regards the church in general, consists in these *four* articles.

1. In *knowing* his church.
2. In the manner how a minister ought to live, with the different kinds of people that compose his church.
3. In preserving order and piety—in supporting *good* establishments, or in forming *new* ones, amongst his people.
4. In the manner of keeping up his authority amongst them.

The care which regards certain persons in particular, consists in giving private advice, and in visiting the sick; on which last head I shall insist largely. To all this I shall add something respecting *criminals*.

Before we enter on our principal subject, I shall shew you, that in order to discharge the ministry well, *three* things are necessary; and these are *Piety, Natural Gifts, and Diligence*.

S E C T. II.

P R E L I M I N A R Y R E M A R K S.

O n P I E T Y.

IT is necessary to have Piety, and it is the principle we ought to set out with. The most essential fault that prevails in our academies is, their not making Piety the capital article, and speaking of it as such. You know

yourselves, here is but little inspection made into the morals of the students. It is surprising, that some authors who have treated of preaching, have said nothing about them: for instance, in the “Treatise of the Composition of a Sermon, by Mr. Claude,”—that article, which is the most essential, is omitted, whilst other points of far less importance are considered.

Two things may convince us, that Piety is the whole of a minister.

1. It is necessary for his *own* salvation.—Without that he condemns himself, either as a profligate, or hypocrite. Hence observe, that a minister is obliged to be more holy than other men.—He has more knowledge—more motives to Piety—with greater aid and assistance.

2. Piety is necessary for the discharge of the sacred ministry; because, without it, you cannot succeed. This I prove from hence,

1st. Without Piety, you cannot comprehend the doctrine, nor understand the genius of the gospel. *The natural man* (says St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 14.) *receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them; because they are spiritually discerned.* And Jesus Christ has taught us the same thing (John vii. 17.) *If any man will do the will of my Father, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.* Piety preserves us from errors that are dangerous, and fatal to our salvation; it keeps us humble—
banishes

banishes vain curiosity—and makes us devoted solely to God.

2. Without Piety you cannot well discharge some functions of the ministry. With respect to *preaching*, the whole of it depends on Piety. It is *that* which makes you seek out edifying subjects, and confine yourselves to such as are useful and necessary. *That* gives force and unction* to your discourse, and makes you say affecting things. A pious man understands the human heart: Piety is the source of true eloquence, which is natural, simple, and sublime†. Observe what Erasmus says of it, *De Art. Concion.* p. 20.

Qui cupit juxta Paulum esse διδακτικός, h. e. ad tradendam Dei doctrinam idoneus, det operam ut prius sit θεωδιδάκτος, i. e. Divinitus edoctus. Ibid. p. 84. *Si cui munificentia numinis adsint ea quæ diximus, huic magnoperè non fuerit opus præceptis ac monitis verbosioribus, quòd habitus ille sincerus ac perfectus facundiam rebus sacris dignam, & pronuntiationem appositam, & gestus decentes ultro suppetet etiam non affectanti.* Agreeably to this Ci-

* We have no word in our language that exactly answers to the original word *unction*; by which we are to understand a tender and devout sense of Piety.

† The necessity of Piety for the attainment of true *christian* eloquence, is warmly and elegantly inculcated in a book translated from the French of F. Gilbert, and entitled, “*Christian Eloquence in Theory and Practice*,” (8vo, London, 1718) Chap. V. This treatise of F. Gilbert, has deservedly met with the highest commendations. It displays a large share of judgment, taste, and elegance; and is highly enriched by copious and beautiful extracts, from that eminent master of christian eloquence, St. Chrysostom. It is well translated by Mr. D’Oyley, who has written a sensible and useful preface to it.

cero says, *Id demum oratorem perficit, si res ex animo geratur.*

Another function of the ministry, is the management of a church or flock.

Now the government of a church, includes some duties which those ministers, who have not Piety, will entirely neglect: such are private advice and admonition—the care of young children, and visiting the sick without being sent for. Moreover, if they should perform those duties, they would perform them ill, so long as they wanted Piety. Some would be dull and timid—some severe and captious—others imprudent—and all this for want of Piety—especially when it is their business to touch the consciences of their people—to pray with them, or comfort them. A man destitute of Piety, would perform all these offices coldly and ungracefully.

A *third* reason which proves the necessity of Piety, is taken from the example that ministers ought to be to their flock. They must be patterns, in order to give their preaching due weight*. *Valet plurimum ad vincendum, probari*

* “IP” (says the excellent archbishop Tillotson) “we would have our instructions effectual, we must be exemplary in our lives. Aristotle tells us, that the manners of the speaker have *Κυριότερον πείσιν*, the most sovereign power of persuasion: and therefore Cato puts it into the definition of an orator, that he is *vir bonus—dicendi peritus*, a good man and an eloquent speaker. The reputation of goodness is more especially necessary and useful, to those whose proper work it is to persuade men to be good; and therefore the Apostle, when he had charged Titus to put men in mind of their duty, immediately adds, *in all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works.*” Tillotson, Sermon. 124.

mores, instituta, & facta, & vitam eorum, qui agunt causas: If Cicero said this of lawyers, with how much stronger reason may we say it of ministers?

All these considerations demonstrate, that the principal quality of a minister is Piety and Devotion. *Devotioni primas partes hic tribuendas censemus, quippe quæ ad tam multa, & tam varia porrigitur, ut in toto ecclesiastico ministerio nulla pars sit, in quâ suum non sit Devotioni singulare pretium,* says Gaussen, *De Ratione Concionandi.* Erasmus was of the same sentiment. *Meâ sententiâ,* says he, *nihil illi prius aut majori studio curandum est, qui tam excellenti muneri sese præparat quam ut cor, orationis fontem, quam purgatissimum reddat.* And elsewhere, *In ecclesiastâ hæc imprimis spectanda sunt, ut cor habeat ab omnibus vitiis, & cupiditatibus humanis mundum; ut vitam habeat, non tantum à criminibus, sed & a suspicione, specieque criminum puram, inculpatam, ut spiritum habeat adversus omnes Satanae machinas firmum, adamantinum, & inconcussum; ut mentem igneam, & ad bene merendum de omnibus flagrantem, ut animum habeat sapientem ad condiendam populi stultitiam, cor habeat prudens, & oculatam ut facile dispiciat quid silendum, quidve dicendum, & apud quos quo tempore, quo modo sit temperanda oratio. Qui cum Paulo sciat mutare vocem suam, & omnia fieri omnibus, utcunque viderit saluti auditorum expedire. Nam hunc unicum oportet esse scopum, ad quem ecclesiastes rationes suas omnes dirigat, à quo si defleteres oculos, continuo fit ut quo magis instructus fueris ad dicendum, eo majorem invehas perniciem in gregem Dominicam.*

He

He says also in the same treatise, *Futuro ecclesiastæ à teneris statim annis enitendum est, ut de scripturis Divinis quam magnificentissime sentiens, cor novum, & spiritum rectum impetret à Domino.* Observe it well, he would have you labour for this from your youth. He repeats the same thing, page 51.

Having thus demonstrated to you the necessity of Piety, I proceed to explain to you the nature of it. Sincere Piety should have *three* degrees. The first consists in not being a bad example, and in the life of a pastor being free from blame. The second in being adorned with all sorts of virtues, 2 *Tim.* iii. The third, in having a great fund of humility, zeal, and devotion.

As I have spoken of these *three* degrees in my treatise on “the Causes of Corruption,” I refer you to that, Part II. Cause III.

Observe in what this Piety consists: 1. In devotion. With this you ought to begin the day and your studies.

2. In an ardent zeal for the glory of God—for that noble end, the reformation of christians.

You ought to be excited to this more especially at present, as so many people have in view an entire reformation of the church. You are young, and you will see some things which those who have been twenty or thirty years in the ministry will not see.

3. This Piety consists in directing all your studies to a good end—to holiness and edification.

Observe,

Observe, that a minister has also his temptations, and that often in his studies he suffers himself to be drawn aside, by not attending to his conscience, and by regarding religion in a speculative manner.

4. You ought to labour after sanctification. The advice I would give you on this subject is this, avoid the faults to which you are most inclined. In order to this, you must examine yourselves. Observe whether you are not addicted to pride, or pleasure; whether you are not of a light or conceited temper; observe what has been your past conduct. It is good also to desire our friends to acquaint us with our faults. I would further advise you to flee from the propensities peculiar to youth, which are pride, sloth, and idleness, the love of pleasures, and levity.

Young people are usually self-conceited; whereas they ought to be modest, and display that modesty by a gentle, submissive behaviour, and by guarding against a captious, opinionative temper.

Sloth and idleness are the source of three great evils, the loss of time, ignorance, and vice. It is not proper to pass away your time either in doing nothing, or in employments of no use.

You ought to shun every thing that has the least tendency to impurity. Avoid such temptations, reading and company as are dangerous, as also excess in food, in sleep and diversions.

You should have gravity, wisdom, circumspection and prudence in company and conversation.

fation. You ought to habituate yourselves to such a behaviour, even with your friends, and in your own family.

In order to flee from the propensities of youth, you should detach yourselves from the world, and live rather retired. This would not only be conducive to your advancement in Piety and your studies, but would also contribute to gain you the esteem and friendship of the world.

S E C T. III.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

On NATURAL GIFTS.

I SHALL speak to you first of Gifts in general, and then of *particular* Gifts.

I. These Gifts are of two sorts—some relate to the mind, and some to the body.

The Gifts of the mind are good sense, penetration, clearness, memory, &c. Here you are to observe, that the most excellent Gifts are not those of the *brilliant*, but those of the *solid* kind, as good sense.

The Gifts of the body are strength of voice, an articulate speech, health, &c. Those who are defective in these corporal Gifts, should not be encouraged to commence students; it would be proper to do what Cicero says Apollonius did, that is, to send them back who have no talent
for

for speaking in public *. Erasmus laments it as the misfortune of his time, that the gospel was preached by people quite destitute of Gifts. *Verum ad conciones sacras admittuntur, interdum etiam affiliunt quilibet adolescentes leves, indocti, quasi nihil sit facilius quam apud populum exponere divinam scripturam, & abunde sufficiat perfricuisse faciem, & absterfo pudore linguam volvere. Hoc malum ex eo fonte manat, quod non perpenditur quid sit ecclesiastici concionatoris, tum dignitas, tum difficultas, tum utilitas.*

It is proper to observe, that these natural Gifts are more necessary now than ever, because the various functions of the ministry are not divided now as they were formerly. The same minister now must preach, govern the church, visit the sick, instruct children; in a word, he must be fit for every thing.

II. With respect to particular Gifts, I have two observations to make to you.

1. Each of you ought to examine his own genius, talents, and character; he should observe for what he is best fitted, and in what he will be able to succeed best, in order to apply himself principally to that, yet without neglecting the rest. One may have a turn for *vehemence*, and therefore he ought not to affect another which is not suited to him; without observing this, he will become ridiculous, as Demosthenes did,

* Our author plainly refers to the following passage: *Maxime probari summum illum doctorem Alabandensem Apollonium, qui cum mercede doceret, tamen non patiebatur eos, quos judicabat non posse oratores evadere, operam apud sese perdere, dimittebatque.* Cic. de Oratore, Lib. I.

who made his audience *laugh*, when he wished to make them *weep*. Another may have a *gentle* turn, and so of the rest.

2. You must not give way absolutely without any restraint to your natural bent, but should avoid the faults into which that would hurry you. Those for instance, who have a great deal of fire usually go on too fast, and if they are not upon their guard, they often fail in point of *good sense*.

Those who have a subtle genius suffer it to evaporate in curiosities, and preach in too metaphysical a strain. People of a cold, phlegmatic turn go deep into things, but are opinionative. It is therefore proper to be on your guard, and cultivate those natural Gifts with that diligence which I shall next proceed to recommend to you.

S E C T. IV.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

On DILIGENCE.

I SHALL shew you three things concerning Diligence; its necessity—the manner in which you ought to employ it, and the object of it.

I. Diligence is necessary to all the world, both to those who have not great gifts, nor great knowledge

knowledge (which is the case with young people) and to those who have them. There are many who devote themselves to the sacred ministry, without natural gifts; others there are, who bury their talents under the pretence that they have gifts; not paying due attention to what St. Paul says to Timothy, *Neglect not the gift that is in thee*, 1 Tim. iv. 14. The necessity of this Diligence is evident from two reasons; because it is the only means of acquiring knowledge, prudence, and other necessary qualities; and because it preserves a man from idleness and vice. Thus it becomes a man to be diligent, were it only for the sake of keeping under his body.

II. You ought to employ your Diligence in the following manner. First, with order; and this order ought to regulate your studies. You should always study what is necessary for the present time, and not imitate some students, who are busy in reading what is not very necessary; as fashionable books, and dissertations on subjects of criticism, &c.

You ought also to have your hours regulated, and not turn night into day; nor act like those who study hard for a time, and then do nothing for a long while together. You must study with assiduity, you must every day do something; without impatience, and interruption.

You must likewise study with exactness. For instance, you must make a rule of doing *one thing*, when you have resolved upon it; you must

must do it well too, and not by halves, that you may not be obliged to do it over again.

In short, you must study for a good end, not for the sake of becoming learned or eloquent, but in order to make a progress in the knowledge of truth, and to become able to improve others in it. You should have in view the advantage of the church.

III. With respect to the object of your Diligence, the whole depends upon the end you propose to yourself: thus you ought to know in what the ministry consists, in order to study Divinity aright. The books which I think you ought principally to read, are the Holy Scriptures, which you should study well; next to them, such things as are requisite for the right understanding them, as Languages, History, &c. To these you should join some books which contain pure doctrine, such as are calculated to prove the truth of Christianity, and to instruct you in your various duties. I would also recommend to you books of devotion. They are very proper, not only to sanctify you, but also to teach you to preach well*.

You ought likewise to study yourself well, and cultivate your own heart diligently §. Hence therefore

* In this view the following books may be read with advantage, 1. Thomas à Kempis, of the Imitation of *Jesus Christ*. 2. The Meditations and Devotional Parts in Bishop HALL's Works. 3. Dr. Horne's Commentary on the Psalms, which is acknowledged to be excellent in a *devotional* view, even by those who do not entirely approve of it in some other respects.

§ The capital error in men's preparing themselves for the sacred function is, that they study books more than themselves; and

therefore you will observe, that I condemn those who devote themselves to useless reading, such as the generality of fashionable books; and also those who turn the accessory into a principal, as they do, who neglect essentials for the sake of studying the *French language*, or *profane history*. There are some subjects which you should make your principal, and study to the bottom; others, which it may be sufficient to have a general knowledge of. On this head Erasmus has made an observation, to which you cannot pay too much attention, and which I recommend to your constant recollection. *Non est necesse ut futurus Ecclesiastes in quibuslibet consumat operam, atque ætatem quæ fugax est, ac brevis, etiamsi contingat Senectus, quæ non ita multis concessa est; sed ea primum, ac potissimum discat, quæ ad docendi munus sunt accommodatissima.* De Art. Conc. p. 77.

Let me desire you to observe further, that amongst those things which are requisite and useful, you should have regard to present necessity. Some things there are that you may learn after you have entered into the ministry, but there are others which you ought to study whilst you are candidates for it.

and that they read Divinity more in other books than the Scriptures, &c.—Burnet's History of his own Times, Vol. IV. p 415. 8vo. Edit. London, 1753.

S E C T. V.

Of PREACHING in GENERAL.

NOW to enter upon our main subject, and answer the end I proposed to myself, I shall first speak to you of the necessity there is of giving some rules upon preaching to students in Divinity, and then of the means that may be used for succeeding in it.

I. The necessity of giving some rules to students about Preaching, appears from hence, that the method of Preaching well is not yet sufficiently understood. Preaching may be ranked amongst those arts which are not yet advanced to a state of perfection.

Before the Reformation, preaching was mere foolishness; but since that time, its credit is somewhat retrieved. I could say a great deal to prove, that the Gospel is not well preached; but I refer you to what I have said of it in *my Treatise on the Causes of Corruption*.—Part. I. Cause I. Part II. Cause III.

The bad method of Preaching is owing to two causes.

First, To the want of just ideas of Preaching. Many imagine, that provided they compleat their hour, and treat a text scholastically with the assistance of some commentaries, they have nothing further to do.

The second cause of bad Preaching is imitation. They never question with themselves whether

whether they ought to preach in any other manner than what is usual. In order to succeed, some pains must be taken; this discourages them, and therefore they go on in the old beaten track. However it be, if the Gospel is not well preached, it is impossible it should bring forth fruit. Let us therefore consider what must be done to promote success.

II. The means that may be employed for this purpose are of two sorts. There are first precepts and rules, then examples and patterns.

Precepts and rules are found either amongst the *living* or the *dead*; I mean—they are given either *vivâ voce*, or in books.

Now it is certain, that in both these respects we have not the assistance necessary. We are almost destitute of such as are given *vivâ voce*. In the academies, where our young students are trained up, they rather teach them to preach *ill*, than *well*. Their method is this, a Professor contents himself with giving his student a text, and leaves to him the task of composing a sermon upon it, without telling him in what light he is to take it; so that it is a miracle if he succeeds. It is true he passes some censures upon his composition, but they come too late, and nobody is the better for them; instead of this he should shew the young man how he ought to make it; in what manner he should turn his discourse so as to render it *affecting*. He is left entirely to his own genius, if that

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leads

leads him right, 'tis well; but if wrong, no pains are taken to remedy it.

There is another essential fault that prevails in our academies, which is this; they do not teach the method of making Catechisms, and the manner of conveying instruction familiarly. As this is the case, is it not a wonder that we still see any good preachers? If they were to teach trades, as they teach the duties of the ministry, we certainly should see but few good workmen. When they would teach a person to write, they do not content themselves with giving him pen, ink, and paper, but they also instruct him how to hold his pen, they guide his hand, &c. It is the same with other arts. Why then do they not take the same pains with those who are intended for the sacred ministry? But your great people, it seems, are employed about other matters. We therefore conclude, that in this point we have not the assistance necessary.

Let us see whether the assistance we may get from books is more considerable. There are several treatises on this subject, but they are all confined to the explication of texts, and they say nothing about the art of making Catechisms, nor the proper method of affecting and gaining the hearts of hearers.

Let us just run over the authors that have written on preaching. They are ERASMUS, F. RAPIN, GAUSSEN and Mr. CLAUDE. Erasmus printed in the year 1543, at Lyons, a book entitled, *Ecclesiastes*, or *De Arte Concionandi*.—

There

There are in this book, as in all the works of Erasmus, some very good things. He sets out in the best way, by shewing that piety is absolutely necessary in order to preach well: but he is too *scholastic*; about the middle of the work, he deals in common-place. He is rather confused, he does not digest his matters well, relying too much upon his reputation. The reading however, of that performance, will be useful.

F. Rapin, the jesuit, has published *Reflections on Eloquence*. You will do well to read them. They are judicious, and you may reap advantage from them. They are, however, only detached reflections, and he omits several essential things *.

Mr. Gaussen has given us a treatise *De Arte Concionandi*, which is the best we have. It is a book you should read constantly and carefully, and make it your *vade mecum*. Of all the divines of France, Gaussen was the most sensible of the defects of the Reformation.

Lastly, Mr. Claude is the author which has written the most largely about Preaching, in his Essay on the Composition of a Sermon †. This is

* "F. Rapin's little book on Eloquence, is by much the best, only he is too short."—Bishop Burnet's Pastoral Care.

† This Essay of Mr. Claude on the Composition of a Sermon, has been lately published in English, with notes, in two large volumes 8vo, by R. Robinson, a dissenting preacher at Cambridge. Of his translation I say but little, well knowing the great difficulty of making a French writer appear to any advantage in an English dress. His notes are abundantly copious, and if I mistake not, at least four times as much as the original text. Some of them are useful and judicious, but many of them much otherwise; and the censorious, virulent spirit which he frequently

is a good work, but there are however, some faults in it; and I would not advise a person to follow it entirely. As that work is in every one's hands, it may be proper to examine it a little, that it may not be taken for a perfect model.

The faults which I find in this work, and which you ought to guard against, are these;

1. He does not propose to himself the true end of Preaching, which is to move and lead men to piety; and his failing thus in the end is a great fault. To convince you of this, I need only tell you, that he employs his whole book on speaking upon the DISCUSSION, and comprehends in two leaves, all he has to say about the APPLICATION.

2. It seems as if he intended to shew the art of Preaching *easily* and not *usefully*. This appears from his twenty-seven sources of invention, which may prove so many sources of delusion, to those who choose to follow them. These might be the means of preaching two hours upon every verse, and indeed upon every word. The best source of invention is good sense and piety.

3. His method leads to Preaching commonplace. See, for example, page 347, 414, &c.

4. He multiplies *heads* more than he ought, or need to do, p. 232, 272. He would have a

frequently indulges against the established church of England, cannot be pleasing either to churchmen or dissenters, except those few (for I charitably hope there are but few) who are like himself, forgetful of that modesty, candour and equity, which become every true Christian,

preacher

preacher treat texts in different views, to which they have sometimes no relation. See p. 168, 169, 170, 306, 307.

5. He loads his sermons too much, p. 215, 223, 405, 431. You need only read this author, to perceive the truth of what I advance. It may be said of Mr. Claude, that he preached better himself, than he taught others to preach. In short, I wish not to depreciate his merit. His work is a posthumous work, and if Mr. Claude had lived longer, he would not have published it in the state we have it.

LECTURE II.

S E C T. I.

Of the MODELS we have for PREACHING.

WHAT we have observed before, proves that there is occasion for precepts to teach the art of preaching, and that those we have are very imperfect. Let us now examine whether we can find more assistance from the second means, *examples* and *models*, which I observed might be employed to promote our success in preaching.

It is very important to have some good Models before our eyes. This is the shortest road to success in preaching. In the arts we improve more by *examples*, than *precepts*; it is the same with preaching; besides, when you shall have composed a sermon, it is not delivered; but it is rare to meet with good Models. However this be, it is proper to draw what we can from those we have before us. We may reap these two advantages from them. The first is, that we may learn to preach. Observe the advice that

Erasmus

Eraſmus gives on the ſubject, p. 199. *Profu-
erit igitur adoleſcentes concioni deſtinatos frequenter
ad eloquentium hominum conciones adducere, ac pau-
latim conſueſacere, ut meminerint, ac reddant quæ
audierint. In hoc ubi profecerint, deinceps admo-
nendi ſunt ſi quid in ea concione dictum fuit annota-
tus dignum.* It is proper to avoid only one thing,
and that is a ſpirit of criticism, which may cre-
ate pride, and prevent edification. *Si quid exci-
derit reprehensione dignum, ut excidunt sæpe per-
multa, illa ſuffecerit indicare adoleſcenti, ſed citra
petulantiam; per hanc occaſionem obrepit maledi-
centiæ vitium, & Eccleſiaſtæ contemptus.* Eraſ.
p. 200.

The ſecond advantage we may reap from liv-
ing Models is, that we may conſult them about
our compositions. When a ſtudent has been
writing upon any text, he ſhould go and conſult
ſome judicious perſon, and deſire him to correct
the faulty paſſages of his composition. This
would be the ſureſt, and the ſhorteſt way to
ſucceed.

Before we go any further, I ſhould obſerve to
you, that young people who intend to form
themſelves upon the examples they have before
them, ſhould take with them theſe *two* pre-
cautions.

The firſt is, not to imitate what is bad in the
Models they make choice of; for in the moſt
excellent, there ſometimes is ſomething bad. If
they imitate them in all points, they often be-
come ridiculous; as for inſtance, thoſe ſtudents
who almoſt all affected to ſpeak through the
noſe

nose because Mr. AMYRAUT, whom they took for their Model, had that fault.

The second precaution they ought to take is this, to imitate only that which is fitted to themselves, and suited to their own talents. For this purpose, every one ought to examine himself, to know what he is fitted for. A man who is mild, and studies to imitate a preacher of a thundering turn, will not succeed. Thus much of *living Models*.

Let us now speak of *dead Models*, which are printed sermons.

Printed sermons may be good Models, if we make a right use of them. There are two sorts of them, the ancient and the modern. The ancient are the fathers of the primitive church. Their manner of preaching was very different from that of the present time, as appears from such of the homilies as are extant among us. The best you can read are those of St. BASIL, and St. CHRYSOSTOM*.

St. AUGUSTIN, does nothing of any worth, especially upon the psalms; he is always running into insipid allegories. St. BASIL may serve as a model for simplicity and unction. St. CHRYSOSTOM is very good to read. It is true, he makes some terrible blunders in *History* and *Geography*. There is, however, much fruit to be reaped from him.

* This preference is given to the homilies of St. Basil and St. Chrysostom, by several eminent judges of true Christian preaching in our own language.—See Burnet's Pastoral Care, and Bingham's Antiquities, Book XIV. Chap. iv. §. 10.

You ought to read him, because he is very popular and simple; he takes the sense of a text in general terms, and does not amuse himself with trifling; he does not load his sermons. He has a great deal of eloquence. The best qualities in his sermons, are his piety and zeal. These often appear even in his exordium; one may say he endeavours to raise his hearers to heaven. He strongly condemns the vices of his time, without regard to persons. If with the faults which St. Chrysostom had, he failed not to support his credit through the force of his piety, that proves how useful piety is.

Modern sermons are very numerous; but to speak only of those which are written in our own language, I should first observe to you that the preachers of the Romish church are of little worth. There is some good morality amongst them,—but a great affectation of eloquence: They devote themselves to beauty of expression, but as to scripture they do not explain it as they ought. You may read them for language and fine turns. I except, however, P. CHEMINAIS, whose Sermons have *unction* in them.

The *reformed* preachers are the safest Models. If you read those who lived at the time of the Reformation, such as CALVIN, BULLINGER, BRENTRUSE, &c. you will observe these three characters in their sermons.

1. Their explications are THEOLOGICAL; you find scarcely any thing in them that tends to the reformation of manners.

2. You

2. You find in them a great deal of controversy, in which they are not to be imitated. At that time it was necessary, in order to shew the people the necessity there was of reforming the church, and to refute adversaries.

3. Morality is entirely neglected by them.

I pass on to those who succeeded them, and whose sermons we have; namely, Messieurs DU MOULIN—Drelincourt—Mestrezat—Dailé—Le Faucheur—Claude—Du Bosc—Allix—Morus*.

* Most of these preachers are celebrated in BAYLE's Dictionary, Edit. 1738;—but instead of transcribing his account of so many French preachers, who all died in the last century, it would be far more useful to point out some in our own language, that are fittest for the use of our young divines. This I would gladly undertake, were it not so difficult and delicate a task to select, from so great a variety, a small number in preference to the rest. For private reading—at least for persons of some literature, we have, undoubtedly, an abundance of sermons very excellent in different views; but few, very few indeed, that are proper to be adopted by our young preachers, for the public instruction of illiterate auditors; and such are the generality of auditors in most congregations, especially in country churches. One or two writers of great repute have advised young divines to preach the compositions of *others*, rather than their own; and this advice has, I fear, been too strictly and implicitly followed by many, and produced the bad effects which Dr. BENTHAM has judiciously pointed out in his "*Reflections on the Study of Divinity*." Mr. ADDISON seems to have recommended this practice to young preachers, in too unlimited and incautious a manner; Bishop BURNET has indeed encouraged it, but not without some useful restrictions and advice. After all, though many sermons, in closeness of stile, and accuracy of reasoning, are certainly preferable to those of the primitive and venerable Bishop Beveridge;—yet in other respects I doubt whether any, for the generality of preachers and hearers, are more excellent than his,—which (as the pious Mr. Nelson observes) were not intended for the press; and on that very account are better calculated for the pulpit. Those also of the late Archbishop SECKER have been very highly, and justly recommended, and are, in general, well suited to a *mixt* audience.

Let

Let me not be understood to set myself up as a judge of these gentlemen, I shall only tell you what the most learned think upon the subject.

Mr. DU MOULIN was one of the ablest preachers of his time, infomuch that the king of England was desirous to hear him preach, and even to make him a bishop in England, if he could have done it. There is morality enough in his sermons; they are replete with piety as well as his other works.

Mr. DRELINCOURT had a great deal of piety, devotion and mildness. But for want of proper caution, his mildness prevented his being sufficiently firm, and he was faulty through too much indulgence. Hence it came to pass, that he laboured more to *comfort* than *sanctify*, which, however, ought not to be done; for holiness is the source of the most solid comfort. See his *Consolations against the Fears of Death*.

He is not sufficiently judicious: he preached only by detached thoughts: he gave too much into allegories and similies. See his *Exordiums*.

Mr. Mestrezat had a great deal of judgment and learning; but, he is a bad model for preaching. He is not popular, he is too dry, rather scholastic, and makes too little application: his sermons are excellent commentaries.

I come to Mr. Faucheur.—He is, perhaps, the man who has succeeded the best in preaching. He has a great deal of good sense, and possesses the following excellencies:—He explains things simply, and for that purpose he
takes

2. You find in them a great deal of controversy, in which they are not to be imitated. At that time it was necessary, in order to shew the people the necessity there was of reforming the church, and to refute adversaries.

3. Morality is entirely neglected by them.

I pass on to those who succeeded them, and whose sermons we have; namely, Messieurs DU MOULIN—Drelincourt—Mestrezat—Dailé—Le Faucheur—Claude—Du Bosc—Allix—Morus*.

* Most of these preachers are celebrated in BAYLE's Dictionary, Edit. 1738;—but instead of transcribing his account of so many French preachers, who all died in the last century, it would be far more useful to point out some in our own language, that are fittest for the use of our young divines. This I would gladly undertake, were it not so difficult and delicate a task to select, from so great a variety, a small number in preference to the rest. For private reading—at least for persons of some literature, we have, undoubtedly, an abundance of sermons very excellent in different views; but few, very few indeed, that are proper to be adopted by our young preachers, for the public instruction of illiterate auditors; and such are the generality of auditors in most congregations, especially in country churches. One or two writers of great repute have advised young divines to preach the compositions of *others*, rather than their own; and this advice has, I fear, been too strictly and implicitly followed by many, and produced the bad effects which Dr. BENTHAM has judiciously pointed out in his "*Reflections on the Study of Divinity*." Mr. ADDISON seems to have recommended this practice to young preachers, in too unlimited and incautious a manner; Bishop BURNET has indeed encouraged it, but not without some useful restrictions and advice. After all, though many sermons, in closeness of stile, and accuracy of reasoning, are certainly preferable to those of the primitive and venerable Bishop Beveridge;—yet in other respects I doubt whether any, for the generality of preachers and hearers, are more excellent than his,—which (as the pious Mr. Nelson observes) were not intended for the press; and on that very account are better calculated for the pulpit. Those also of the late Archbishop SECKER have been very highly, and justly recommended, and are, in general, well suited to a *mixt* audience.

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takes long texts. He is popular ; what he says is clear and simple. As a proof that he understood the true nature of the ministry, you will observe that he *disputes* very little. He knew the art of making applications, which was very rare in his time. We might even say, that he is the person who has taught us how to make them. You may, therefore, read him with advantage ; yet it is not proper to imitate him in all points. He makes his periods too long. This is owing to his being a little Ciceronian, and to his studying to imitate that author, of whom he was perfectly master.

Mr. Daillé was one of the most learned ministers of our communion. In general, he preached well ;—and what is still better, he always *supported* himself. There are, however, some faults found in him. He is too *didactic*, and *controversial*. He refers almost every thing to doctrine and controversy, which is proper only for a professor to do. He is not sufficiently methodical ; you scarcely find any thing *exact* in his sermons. He is rather too dry. He is of too severe a temper. He seems to be always seeking a quarrel with the *Romish Communion*, and often amuses himself with refuting *particular* commentaries. He is too violent against every thing that differed ever so little from the sentiments of the *reformed*. When for instance, he attacks episcopacy, he disputes about it with the same vehemence, as if it was against the Catholic religion. He thought the *reformers* had brought every thing to perfection ;

tion; on this account he was not much esteemed in England.

Mr. Morus has made a great deal of noise in the world. He was an excellent man, a good divine, a good philologer, and learned in antiquity. But as to his sermons, they are trifling things. He had, as it were, some thunderbolts to strike with; but when you have read one of his sermons, you will get but very little from it: he was a great wit: he offends by his affectation in playing, and quibbling upon words, from which he knew not how to refrain himself.

Mr. Claude is judicious. He has a strong and manly eloquence, and natural expression. We may say, that he preached better himself than he taught others to preach. The four first sermons that he wrote upon the *Parable* of the wedding, are excellent, but the *fifth* is common-place throughout.

Mr. Du Bosc had fine parts for preaching, he possessed above all, a talent for speaking well. It is known that Louis XIV, having heard him, gave him this character—that *he had heard the best speaker in his kingdom*. He is not however a model for your imitation, he affects too much politeness, and I think that a fault. He preaches common-place too much; there are some things which return too often, for instance, the objections, when he is explaining some exhortation to holiness, *Can then a man do that, &c.*

Mr.

Mr. Allix has written the best sermons we have.—He explains scripture as he ought.—He presses strongly reformation of manners. His sermon on the *Miseries of Impenitence*, is one of the best pieces we have. He does not amuse himself with trifles—with ingenious thoughts, &c.

It may, however, be observed, that he is not sufficiently *clear*. See the beginning of the sermon I have cited—He is not quite *popular* enough.

S E C T. II.

Of SERMONS and CATECHISMS, in general.

I AM going to speak to you of the manner of composing Sermons and Catechisms, and I must inform you beforehand, that I shall say many things that are applicable both to *Sermons* and *Catechisms*.

To begin therefore with Sermons, I propose to give you first two rules.

The first regards the end which you ought to propose to yourself.

The second will treat of the choice of texts, and subjects.

I. It is necessary before all things, to propose to yourself an end, without which you will act at random. Now I have two things to shew you on this subject.

1. What is *not* that end.—2. What is.

First,

First, Several preach without having any *end*; they only propose to themselves the filling up their hour, and they preach only for the sake of talking.

In the second place, there are others who indeed propose to themselves an end, which is the explaining of scripture, but they do not propose to lead men to piety.

In the third place, the end is not to dispute.

In the fourth place, it is not to appear eloquent, or acquire reputation; *that* is criminal.

Lastly, Much less ought we to preach our own interest or passions.

2. Now to tell you what is the *end*—it is in general edification; it is the same with that of religion itself, and one may know from hence what one ought to preach. Now religion consists in teaching men their duty, and in leading them to it; this also is what you ought to pursue with ardour: As often therefore as you enter the pulpit, you should have in view the advancement of God's glory, and study to instruct, and to inspire your hearers with piety and holiness. If you propose to yourselves any other end, you will never succeed: For if you are wanting in piety yourselves, you will not propose to lead others to it. This also shews you, that without piety, you will not be able to preach well.

Let us now come to the choice of subjects; this is a very important point. We often

D judge

judge of a preacher by the reading of his text.

Observe therefore what you ought to do; you ought to aim at *edification*: For this purpose you should confine yourselves to the most edifying and most necessary subjects. The life of a preacher is not long enough for him to amuse himself with matters of little use, when there are so many of such great importance.

But doubtless this objection may be started, *Are not all the matters contained in scripture good and useful?*—True; but they are not all of the *same* importance. If, for example, a preacher were to explain the tenth chapter of *Genesis*, he would do no great good; because he must enter into a detail of *Chronology*, *Geography*, and *Criticism*, which would be of little use to the common people. The same may be said of the last chapters in *Ezekiel*; you should also never make choice of *mutilated* and imperfect texts.

In order to choose your subject well, observe here a maxim which you should always attend to, and which will clear up the point to you. It is this, that there are two kinds of *utility*, a *general* utility—and a *particular* one.

I. There is a general utility; I mean that there are texts, and subjects which may be proposed at all times—in all places—and to all sorts of persons. Such are those which explain the *principal articles* of religion.

With respect to *truths*, it is proper to preach often upon those which are *fundamental*—such

as the existence of God—providence—redemption—the last judgment, &c.

With respect to *duties*, it is proper to preach often upon the christian virtues—upon the love of God, and our neighbour—upon purity—humility, &c.

Amongst *vices*, it is proper to preach principally against swearing—hypocrisy in divine worship—impurity—and all the vices that are most in fashion.

In order to lead men to all their various duties, it is useful to set frequently before their eyes the vanity of life—worldly things—the certainty of death—judgment, &c.

F. Rapin understands exceedingly well how a point ought to be pressed home, and he marks out the subjects which he thinks ought to be chiefly insisted upon in the pulpit. See *his Reflections on the Eloquence of the Pulpit*.

Be careful therefore to confine yourselves to those general matters; such as the love of God—the renouncing of the world, &c. They are of the most importance, because they comprehend, as I may say, every thing. By this you will oppose in an oblique manner every sin. You should always have in view this *general* utility.

II. There is a *particular* utility, to which you should be attentive; and that is the necessity of your flock: the maxim which you ought to observe here is this—that a minister should choose such texts as are adapted not to his own inclination and humour, but to the necessity of

his flock. It is not sufficient to say useful things, but it is proper to have regard to the most urgent necessities. It is proper to act as a wise physician does, who knowing the disorder of his patient, gives him precisely such things as are requisite to cure him of his present disorder: thus a minister ought to have regard to *times*. When a flock labours under any great affliction, or at the time of a fast, or the holy sacrament, it is proper to choose texts suitable to those circumstances: he should also have regard to *places*: he ought not to preach in the same manner in the country, as he would do in towns: there are some places where certain sins are more in fashion than in others; for instance, in our mountainous countries, impurity and laziness prevail more than in the low country; on the other hand, in the low country they are more addicted to drunkenness.

It is proper to pay attention to the persons to whom we speak. A minister should endeavour to know the disposition of his hearers—their humours—their reigning faults—their inclinations—their manner of living, &c. Thus it is proper to have his eyes continually open to the necessities of his flock.

From the two principles which I have been establishing, I draw two inferences.

The first is, that the generality of ministers do not discharge their duty. They make choice of subjects from whence they derive little or no utility to the people, and it would
be

be very necessary to lay them aside, in order to treat of more useful ones. They explain texts that appear to them the easiest: now in this they are faulty through *ignorance* or *idleness*.

1. Through ignorance, because they have not been informed to what they are called.

2. Through idleness: we are more in danger of being faulty in this way, than any other. We have regard only to the *easiness* of subjects. When we write upon certain texts which please us, and do not study to touch the consciences of our hearers, we avoid a great deal of labour. Every preacher ought to be scrupulous of saying things of little use, and to employ his time to the best advantage, in order to satisfy his conscience.

The second consequence I would draw respects the question, *Whether we ought to preach upon detached texts of scripture, or upon whole books?* It is difficult enough to determine this point. There are however some rules upon this head.

1. When we see that there is a pressing necessity of preaching upon certain matters, we ought to quit every thing to choose subjects suitable to them; as when we observe a vice gaining ground amongst our flock, we ought to quit every thing, whatever we may have taken in hand, in order to root *that* out.

2. When we would undertake to explain any books, we had better choose some out of the *New Testament*, than the *Old*.

3. When we choose any book, and especially any of the historical books, we ought to

make great progress, and take long texts. It is not right to imitate some ministers who take up many years about one book, whilst they neglect many essential matters. Observe here an important remark—that what I have been saying to you, ought to be put in practice more in the *Country*, than in *Towns*. In towns, where there are several pastors, we may allow ourselves more liberty; because sermons are frequent there, and what one does *not*, another *does*. But in the *country*, where sermons are more rare, it is good to be often repeating necessary and important things; we instruct peasants; and children only by dint of repeating, and renewing our charge.

S E C T. III.

Of the different SORTS of SERMONS.

THERE are two sorts of Sermons, which it is of importance to distinguish. There are some in which we propose *simply* to explain Scripture. There are others, in which we treat some subject in particular.

We do not at this day greatly distinguish them, though formerly the fathers of the church put a great difference between homilies and sermons. In their homilies they explained scripture very simply; but their Sermons were discourses of piety or doctrine, in which they
treated

treated such matters as they judged the most important. Thus St. CHRYSOSTOM made some Sermons de Eleemosynâ contra Judæos, &c. There are some Sermons which may be called *mixt*; in which we give *first*, a short explication of our text, and *then* soon leave it, in order to treat some point we proposed to ourselves.

This distinction obliges me to make two remarks, which relate to the choice of texts.

I. When you would compose homilies, you ought to choose texts that are rather long, and have a compleat sense. This is what the ancient fathers did.

In order to give you more light in this point, it is proper here to speak of the origin of homilies and sermons. For this purpose, it is necessary I should inform you, how *divine service* was celebrated among the Jews. On the sabbath they began with prayers,—then they proceeded to the reading of the law, and the prophets; afterwards they invited those that were present at the reading, to address some *exhortation* to the people. You may see examples of this in *the Acts of the Apostles*. The first Christians, who retained many customs of the Jews, when they found them good ones, performed *divine service* nearly in the same manner: They began with adoration and prayer, after that they read the scripture. In process of time, they marked out a gospel and epistle for every Sunday. After the reading, they suspended the service, in order to give an explanation of the gospel: Hence it comes to pass, that in the

church of Rome, the sermon is preached in the morning, before they finish the service, and the mass. It were to be wished, that in our churches they had retained the custom of reading, and that things were performed there in the same manner as they were formerly.

By what I have said on the origin of homilies, you may observe that nothing hinders ministers from making them. It seems necessary for ministers to revive them*. The advantages that we might draw from them are these :

1. We should make great progress in a little time, and the people would understand their religion better.

2. We should make no digressions, but keep close to our subject.

3. The people would retain better what we said to them, because our sermons would not be so loaded ; and in reading the scriptures at home, they would easily recollect the reflections they had heard at church.

4. This method of explaining scripture is the most *apostolical* and christian. There is no

* Archbishop HORT warmly recommends,—“ the reviving “ that almost antiquated exercise of *expounding the holy Scriptures* to our congregations.” He points out the method of proceeding in this exercise, and the great advantages that both the clergy and people would reap from it.—See his CHARGE to the Clergy of the diocese of TUAM, (in 1742) p. 24—27.—This charge deserves the highest encomiums, for its great variety of most important instruction and advice, expressed in an easy, elegant style. About ten years since, a friend of mine, a zealous member of the SOCIETY for promoting Christian Knowledge, caused this CHARGE to be reprinted, and it may be had by any member of that Society. Price 3 d.—See also *Christian Eloquence*, &c. p. 225—228.

occasion for us to make a vain parade of our eloquence.

II. I come now to what are properly called Sermons, in which we treat some point of doctrine, or morality, or some detached texts.

When we treat any subject, we ought to choose texts that relate to it; it is sometimes difficult to find proper ones; but a minister that serves a church, is not obliged to find such as square precisely with his subject: he may take such as will serve only for a pretext*. St. CHRYSOSTOM often made use of such: there are many such to be met with. In former times they did not take any text, when they intended to treat some particular matters; which proves the origin of Sermons to arise from reading: when the fathers ascended the pulpit, they contented themselves with saying at the beginning of their Sermons, *I design to preach to you to day on such and such a point, &c.* These were their simple discourses. It were to be wished that we enjoyed at this day the liberty of acting in the same

* Young preachers should be very cautious and sparing in the use of this liberty; and should always endeavour to observe the strictest congruity they can between their texts and sermons. Our Author's indulgence in this point is greater than many of our best divines seem willing to allow.—“A sermon should be made for a text, and not a text found out for a sermon; for to give our discourses weight, it should appear that we are led to them by our texts: such sermons will probably have much more efficacy than a general discourse, before which a text seems only to be read as a decent introduction, but to which no regard is to be had in the progress of it”—Burnet's Past. Care.—See also Archbishop HORT's Charge, p. 5; and Archbishop SECKER's Charges, p. 293.

manner;

manner; but we should give great offence, if we took no text.

Here a question may be started, namely, Whether we may write many Sermons on the same text? I answer when we would confine ourselves to explanation, we ought, as far as we can, to make only one; but when we explain a subject on account of a text, we may make as many Sermons as we please.

Before we enter into a detail of the rules that relate to preaching, I must give you some maxims to which it will be proper for you to attend.

1. You should not always follow the same method, but you should vary it according to the end you propose: the method of treating *Sermons* should be different from that in which you treat *Homilies*.

2. Your method ought to be varied even in subjects of the same nature. By making *always* an exordium, *always* a division, and *always* an application, you may give disgust. *In omnibus rebus similitudo est satietatis mater*, says Cicero †. When you diversify your method, it strikes the hearer's mind, and renders him attentive; what I mean then is this; that a minister should reserve to himself a decent liberty. Circumstances will furnish him with occasions enough for varying: besides, as he ought to follow the movements of devotion, and as devotion is not restrained to method, he may digress from it. Sometimes he may make an application,

† De Inventione, Lib. 1.

sometimes

sometimes intermix the application with the body of the discourse, &c. And hence I would answer a question which is started respecting preaching, or rather shew that the question is useless; namely, *Whether it is proper always to make an exordium, and always to reserve the uses to the end, &c.* What I have said overthrows all that: you may sometimes do *one*, and sometimes the *other*. What ought to be observed, is a proper regard to circumstances of times, places, persons, subjects, &c. It is a great mistake to think it *always* a matter of indifference, whether you follow any method, or no method at all.

LECTURE III.

S E C T. I.

PRECEPTS *relative to* PREACHING.

GENERAL Rules for the composition of Homilies and Sermons.

There are two sorts of Rules, 1. General rules, which respect *all* kinds of Sermons. 2. Particular rules adapted to *particular* kinds of sermons, such as those in which scripture is explained; those in which some subject is treated, —and occasional sermons;—as on fasts, sacrament-days, &c. We shall speak of these rules separately.

With respect to general rules for homilies and sermons, I think the following the most necessary.

I. Rule. A man that would compose a sermon, ought to begin with prayer and devotional exercise. I also think that those prayers which are offered up before a composition * is begun,

* In the last volume of TILLOTSON's Sermons, there is an excellent prayer, which (it is supposed) the good archbishop used before he composed his sermons.

are more seasonable than those which are offered up in the pulpit to implore assistance from God. When a sermon is composed, we have not the same graces to ask of God, as we had before; we must forget nothing that may affect us: in order to this, you see clearly that it is necessary to know ourselves. Through the means of piety and devout emotions, we acquire certain dispositions and sentiments of heart, which animate our style and conceptions, and render every thing we say affecting, because it then flows from the heart; but when we do not draw things from the heart, they are usually flighty and bombast. Vide *Gaussenum sub finem*.

II. Rule. After being thus prepared by prayer and devotional exercises, it will be highly proper for you to conceive the end you propose to yourself, and to fill your whole mind and heart with your design; without this you will never produce any good. Thus before you write any thing (for you should never begin with that) you ought to fill your imagination with your subject, form a plan of it in your head, and then put down your thoughts on paper. A minister who engages in composition, ought to draw out his plan upon paper in some certain manner, that he may be able to put every thing in its proper place, and always discern what he ought to make his grand point; lest his imaginations should lead him astray into digressions: You see from hence, that it is always proper for a man to chalk out a road for himself.

III. The *third* rule regards *invention*. In order to invent, there are two sources which we ought to consult—NATURE and PIETY. *Si quis ad hæc duo, Devotionem dico, & Naturam, oculos convertiat, vereri non debet ne in eâ longâ sanè, & parum tutâ etiam navigatione, à portu nimium aberret.* Gaussenus, p. 58.

If these two principles were followed, it would not be necessary to give so many precepts. Piety and Nature would inspire every thing that is necessary to be said in Sermons. When we rightly consider what preaching is, we must see that it does not require so much apparatus.

Why should we speak otherwise in the pulpit than we do any where else?

But, you will say, *why then do we give rules and precepts to teach the method of preaching?* I answer, those rules are designed to bring you back to Nature, from which men have gone astray. They have introduced abuses into the manner of preaching. Preachers have gone astray from *good sense*, and followed custom.—They do not consult piety.

The whole secret, therefore, of preaching, consists in bringing them back to *Nature* and *Piety*.

I. I would therefore advise you to consult *Nature*, by which I mean two things.

1. That you choose *good sense* for your guide; this is an essential point to a preacher. The greater talents he has, the more will he run astray, if he be destitute of good sense. The imagination, if good sense does not serve it as
a guide

a guide and curb, is like a fiery horse that runs away at random. A minister, who is wanting in this essential qualification, will not be able to deceive long; he will soon become known, and this defect will exceedingly disgust his hearers. If therefore we wish to produce any effect, we must not stray from good sense: yet we seldom meet with people who consult it.—Gausſen, p. 178.

In order to avoid running astray in your compositions, you ought to consider things coolly, and not be precipitate: What ruins *young people*, is their being too attentive to *ornaments*.

2dly, By *Nature*, I understand every man's *genius*. I only mention this here, to remind you of what I said upon it before. Every man ought to consult his own genius. Good sense is common, but geniuses are different: observe therefore, what is your manner of conceiving things, and suffer that to guide you; but remember, you must not give yourselves up blindly to it.

II. The second source of invention is *piety*, which is an excellent, and abundant source, without which you will infallibly fall into barrenness. But in vain shall I point out this source to you, if you have a heart devoted to the world. You see therefore the necessity of that being always sanctified. *Illa est devotionis propria dos, quòd dum suos in intimam familiaritatem insinuet, illa dehinc familiaritas gratiam parit, in quâ sunt omnes thesauri sapientiæ, & cognitionis qui olim erant reconditi*, Gausſen, p. 149—157. I have shewn you that nothing gives so great force to a discourse as *piety*. *Devotio cum ec-*
clesiasten

clefias ten suis uſſit facibus, eum rapit extra ſe, nec ſui ſatis compotem eſſe ſinit, ut verè & ſcitè reſpondiſſe videatur qui interrogatus ab amico, quà viâ potiffimùm magnos in eloquentiâ chriſtianâ progreſſus faceret? ſi, inquit, maxime ames Chriſtum.

But doubtleſs, you will ſtart this objection, *Why do we often ſee preachers without piety draw tears from their audience?* to this I anſwer

1. That tears are not always a certain ſign of the goodneſs of a ſermon.

2. A man who ſays things that are good in themſelves, may make an impreſſion on the hearers, when they abſtract from the perſon that ſpeaks them.

3. Tears may come from the good diſpoſition of the hearers. This is what a man once anſwered to a libertine, who had made him weep, *Non tua facundia, ſed miſericordia mea extraxit lachrymas.* But this ſhould lead you to remark, that if a preacher without piety can affect, how much good would he do, if to his talents he ſhould add the aſſiſtance of piety.

III. A miniſter ought to do the utmoſt he is able of himſelf. Before he has recourſe to commentaries, he ſhould draw forth all he is able from his own genius. I ſpeak not at preſent of the uſe that may be made of commentaries, this will come in afterwards: thus labouring by himſelf, he will reap the following advantages;

1. His mind will be enlarged; whereas if you take away books from thoſe who make a trade of copying, they have nothing to ſay.

2. What

2. What is thus written will have a certain original air, and will affect and persuade infinitely more than that which is scraped together from every side.

3. This *assists* a preacher: the things which he draws from himself make a much better impression on the mind and memory, than what he has taken from other writers.

Hold it therefore as a maxim, to do by yourself the utmost you are able; and not imitate those people who run immediately to commentaries, before they have meditated on the subject they have undertaken.

IV. Supposing a man has observed all I have been saying, he ought, after that, to listen to every thing his imagination suggests, and must reject nothing; you especially who are just beginning compositions, should observe this; when you discourage the imagination, it loses it's fire and vigour. I would therefore have you put down on paper, whatever comes into your mind. You ought not, on such occasions, to think at all about style: for sometimes a single reflection about a word, is enough to dissipate all we have in our mind. By what I have said, you clearly see that I do not think it right, that you should preach your first conceptions.

V. When you have thus got your materials together, you must range them in due order; it is then, and not before, that you are to examine them. If they are good, it is then that you must judge of the length of your sermon,

E

&c.

&c. There is always occasion to retouch your first conceptions : you ought more especially to revise them when you are in cool blood. For many things appear to us in the heat of meditation *good to day*, which will not appear *so to-morrow*.

VI. The sixth rule regards the necessity there is of writing down your sermons. I shall dwell a little upon this point, because men are divided in their opinions about it. Some think that it is unnecessary to write them down, others say the contrary *. With respect to the first persons, they ought to be cautious, lest they advance this opinion rather through idleness than reason. We love every thing that flatters our indolence : but if we consult master of the art, they will all tell us that it is proper to write. Cicero (Lib. 1. de Orat.) tells us, that the pen is the best mistress of eloquence : this labour is still more necessary for one who speaks on the part of God, than for any other.

A man must have a very good opinion of himself, who fancies himself able to preach the gospel as he ought without preparation. But,

* Considering the dispositions and talents of men are so extremely various and frequently opposite to each other, we cannot wonder at the diversity of sentiments even amongst eminent writers, concerning the best method of preaching. See Burnet's Pastoral Care, ch. ix.—Secker's Charges, p. 312—315. Yet I cannot but express my earnest wishes, that our author's observations on the dangers attending *extempore* preaching, may be duly considered by several of our young divines, who are unwilling to take the trouble he recommends of writing down their sermons.

you will say, *That is a great deal of trouble*: true, but it is well employed, and you ought not to regret it. By doing this, you will cultivate your genius and memory. You may still object, that "*it clogs the memory.*" I answer that you must not write down your pieces in order to repeat them like a school-boy, but in order to regulate your conceptions: you may add, *That those who preach extempore have more fire.* True, but you ought to consider these two things: on the one hand, it is not right to confine yourselves entirely to your paper; and on the other, it is useful to write, in order to moderate your fire. When a man is in a heat, and suffers himself to be hurried away with it, every thing pleases him; but the hearer, who feels not the same emotions, does not reason like the preacher. Besides, when he gives vent to his fire, he is in danger of falling into repetitions, and liable to push his censures too far, and find cause to repent of them.

Some men there are of a happy genius, who have acquired a habit of being exact, and possess a great share of good sense and experience; such as these may preach extempore. It is sufficient for one who has preached a considerable number of years, to content himself with an analysis; but it is always proper for young people to write down their sermons: when a man has been accustomed to writing, and exactness, although he should happen to be taken by surprize, and be obliged to preach without much preparation, it would scarcely be perceived.

S E C T. II.

What we ought to attend to in revising our
COMPOSITIONS.

WHEN we have written down our thoughts, in the manner that has been prescribed, our next business is to examine and revise them.

Now as you may ask me, what ought to be attended to in revising them, I have the following remarks to offer you on this subject.

I. The first thing you ought to observe is, *exactness*: In a sermon, it is not sufficient that there is nothing contradictory to justice and truth: this exactness must be preserved in your *reasonings*. They must be *clear*, solid, and conclusive: you must support, and not contradict yourself, nor destroy in one passage what you have advanced in another, as many people do.

You must also be *exact* in *facts*: To reason ill is disgraceful; but to advance, for facts, things that are not true, is much more so. You should therefore never cite, as facts, what you are not well assured of. I cannot approve of those preachers, who speak every thing upon the credit of others: it is evident they must often be liable to speak falsehoods. I find an instance of this in Mr. CLAUDE, p. 279, where he says, that the Jews were extremely corrupt in our Saviour's time, and never had been in such a state

a state before : whereas it is certain, that so much piety was never seen among them *. The good people amongst them had more lights, and better sentiments than ever their fathers had. See what Josephus says on this point.

When therefore you advance any thing, as fact, always have recourse to the fountain-head. But in order to this, you must be considerably learned,—though, perhaps, not a compleat scholar. Observe further, a piece of advice I must give you respecting exactness ; which is, that you never go out of your proper sphere : For example, we see many preachers who take upon themselves to speak about war, or about law, &c. and often get out of their element. Unless, therefore, you understand things perfectly, you should be silent about them, if you would not expose yourselves to the raillery of your hearers.

II. You ought to say nothing but what is *useful*. I distinguish what is *true*, from what is *useful*. You may say things that are true, clear, and solid, which are of no service to the common people ; as if you were to treat some point of *Criticism*, &c. By this *usefulness*, I mean a general usefulness : You should therefore ask yourself on every article, *will that husbandman—that man or maid-servant who hears me, will they profit from this, &c. ?* You should always aim at

* There seems to be a strange mistake in this stricture on Mr. CLAUDE, and the state of the Jews in our Saviour's time : whether the error is to be attributed to our author himself, or to the person who compiled this work from his lectures, I am unable to determine.

edifying, and remember that you are speaking on the part of God to his people.

III. There is a third thing to which you ought to attend, and which is very important; and that is *Clearness**; it is the soul of a discourse. When you are obscure, the more learned you are, the more mischief you do. This Clearness depends

1. On things themselves. When you are preaching, you ought to have simple and natural ideas of what you deliver. You must conceive things clearly yourself, in order to explain them intelligibly to others. For this purpose hold it for a maxim, that common things are always the clearest: Abstract things do by no means enter into the minds of the people; and when you have said a thing that is clear, do not dwell upon it, but take care, lest by studiously adding other things to it you render it obscure.

2. Clearness depends on terms: You should avoid obscure terms,—such as those of the school, which are not understood by the people—metaphors—figurative stile, &c. Observe, that what is clear to the preacher is not always so to the people. But you will never do what I am advising you to, unless you are humble. Thus I always return to the grand maxim, which I laid down at the beginning, which

* A very sensible and elegant writer (on serious subjects) has lately treated on this, and several other articles relative to the composition of a sermon, in a very judicious and pleasing manner. See a *Dissertation*, with notes prefixed, to a volume of sermons, by JOHN MAINWARING, B. D. fellow of St. John's college, Cambridge.

is, that you must have piety,—and you must always have edification in view.

As this clearness is of such great importance, I will tell you what is requisite for giving more clearness to a discourse.

1. You may introduce examples, or histories from scripture, which, if well applied, serve for excellent illustrations.

2. Comparisons are very useful for the people; a proof of this is, that our Saviour used them very frequently; but you ought to choose common things, such as the people understand, if they have nothing too low in them.

3. It is proper to turn things different ways; you ought more especially to have recourse to *this* when things are obscure, and likewise very important.

4. In order to clear a thing, it is proper to repeat it. To do this may give you pain; but that pain is ill-founded, and I find that to know how to repeat a thing seasonably, is a considerable part of eloquence.

IV. You must have regard to *Simplicity*. This may appear to be the same thing with clearness; but, however, there is some difference. This simplicity ought to prevail through your whole discourse. It is a fault not to be simple. This simplicity is the characteristic of our Saviour. It obliges us to put nothing too learned, far-fetched, and too sublime in our sermons. Moreover, it requires us to avoid subtle and metaphy-

fical reasonings*. When you would make use of any reason, and find that you cannot establish it without long consequences, it is better to lay it aside: Simplicity should also appear in your stile, delivery, and gesture; in a word, it ought to reign through the whole of your preaching. You should consider that you are speaking to the people, and that a great parade is of no value to them.

V. You must have a great regard to order. This is a great assistance to the preacher. He learns his sermon with more ease. Method † also assists the understanding of the hearer; whereas he is discouraged, and unable to follow the preacher, if he has no order at all. Now to follow good order, it is always proper to begin with the simplest things; from hence you may pass on to compound ideas; and afterwards distinctions are conducive to order. It is useful to propose your heads one after another; you must, however, carefully observe, that as that promotes clearness, when you know how to propose them seasonably; so also it may tend to confound the hearer, when

* “ Too close a thread of reason, too great an abstraction of thought, too sublime, and too metaphysical a strain, are suitable to very few auditories, if to any at all.” — BURNET. Are not these reflections deserving the attention of many abstruse, though otherwise excellent, preachers, as well in our Universities, as in other places?

† “ That method will always appear to be the best, by which the subject of the text may be the easiest understood, and the Sermons made upon it the easiest remembered.” — Archdeacon Sharpe’s Works, vol. II.

you

you load your sermon with too many subdivisions, since it is impossible that he should follow you. You may therefore sometimes do it; but when there are too many of them, you may omit pointing them out.

VI. The sixth rule that I have to give you is to be *precise*. Precision is a considerable character, which you should endeavour to acquire. To be precise is to say what is essential, and to say it clearly and briefly.

In order to be precise, you must say every thing that is necessary, and nothing that is useless; but the difficulty is to hit that essential point. For this end, I must refer you to those two guides which I have so often advised you to follow, namely, piety and good sense. Always consider yourselves as speaking to the common people, and not to the learned. In order to be *precise*, you must be *clear*. To be obscure is not to be precise, though you should even say nothing useless. If you are not attentive to that clearness, you will make good the old observation—*Dum brevis esse volo, obscurus fio*. This was the fault of Grotius; he is precise in the highest degree, but he is not clear in proportion. Precision requires you to say things in a few words: you should always express your thoughts in as few words as you can, without being obscure.

Of all the characters you can study for the edification of the church, there is none you ought to labour to attain more than this: when your hearer knows that you have this quality,

quality, he will listen to you with attention, because he knows you will say nothing to him but what is necessary; whereas when he sees a preacher diffuse *, he suffers many things to pass without scruple, and thus insensibly loses his attention.

VII. You must know how to restrain yourself, and not load your sermons too much. This rule is necessary. We meet with many, who either through habit or affectation, labour to exhaust their subjects: when there is so great an abundance of matter, the people do not listen to you, and are even discouraged by it: nothing is more disgusting, than to see a preacher give a loose to his imagination to exhaust his subject. Mr. CLAUDE justly condemns this. (page 201.) It were to be wished, that he had not himself fallen into this fault, by loading his analyses too much. What he says (page 351.) of the sources of invention, naturally leads to this fault.

What I think you ought to do is this—not to examine a subject in all its extent †, but only according to the nature of the text you are handling, or agreeably to the end you propose to yourself. If, for instance, I were to preach *upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ*, I should

* These remarks are deserving the attention of a preacher, chiefly when he is to address himself to an audience of the higher class; for as to common, illiterate hearers, a style that is rather diffuse and copious, seems most proper and useful.

† “A preacher should seldom make excursions into branches even of the same subject, if the consideration of those branches be not authorized by the text.” — Archdeacon Sharpe.

have an infinity of things to say about the proofs—the nature—the fruits, &c. of that resurrection; but perhaps my text would oblige me to speak only of the proofs of it, I ought not therefore to speak of the whole subject in general.

But you will say, *Ought we not to explain things to the bottom?* That I own is sometimes necessary, and we should explain some subjects with exactness, but there is not always a necessity for doing this: besides, when we do this, we ought to know how to limit ourselves; otherwise we shall make a sermon for the sake of a word, and thus fall into repetitions. The apostles were not used to this in their discourses, but explained things very simply: you should therefore confine yourselves to simple explications: when you undertake a subject, you may then exhaust it, provided however that you say nothing but what is useful: I heartily wish this rule was well observed. We should not then meet with so much superfluity, and so many digressions in sermons.

VIII. The former rule which requires you to know how to confine yourselves, obliges me to add an eighth rule to it—which is, that you must not preach common-place; what I mean by preaching common-place is this:

I. When on account of a word, you say every thing you find in common-places, or your collections; it is idleness that occasions ministers to preach common-place; for when
they

they preach in that way, they find their sermons all made.

2. I call it preaching common-place, when you enter into theological considerations and objections without necessity, as Mr. Du Bose does. I do not censure all his considerations, some of them may have their use.

S E C T. III.

Concerning OBJECTIONS in Sermons.

AS you are sometimes obliged to make objections in sermons, it may not be useless to give you some rules on this subject. What I would advise you to observe here is this :

I. That you ought to make as few objections as possible. Many preachers start objections to the people, which they would never have dreamt of. Unless therefore they come naturally into the mind, it is best to pass over them; for otherwise, you only put scruples into the heads of your hearers. In that you must consult good sense. In order to propose an objection well, you must judge of it by the minds of the people, not by your own. Many objections arise from the fault of the preacher, who is too fond of subtilties, and not from the subject he is treating. Such are those which arise from the *scholastic* divinity.

II. When you propose any objection, you should propose it *fairly*. You must not weaken it,

it, but speak things as they are. We meet with many preachers, who flatter the party they are defending. You must also state it clearly, in few words, and without any circumlocution; and not in a prolix manner as Mr. Du Bosc does, who sometimes employs a page or two in stating objections of little use.

III. You should answer an objection well, or not attempt to make it. An objection that is not well answered, does more harm than good, because it puts great scruples into a hearer's mind. But I must here repeat what I have already said, which is, that you should propose as few objections as possible, and never do it, but when absolute necessity requires it.

S E C T. IV.

Of citing PASSAGES *from* SCRIPTURE.

WHEN you revise your compositions, you must be very attentive to citing passages from the sacred scripture: That you ought to cite scripture no one will doubt.—Passages drawn from thence have great force, and give a weight to our discourses. This reflection might appear useless, if we had not for some time past seen many preachers, who preach in a manner entirely *philosophical*. Their sermons are full of nothing but reasonings, and are absolutely destitute of passages from scripture; though the language of scripture is al-
ways

ways the best. Mr. DE SUPERVILLE, who has written sermons that are in other respects excellent, is very faulty in this.

Now what you ought to observe in citing scripture is this :

I. It is not your business to cite passages at random, but you must cite scripture seasonably, and apply passages that are proper to throw a light on what you are advancing.

II. In order to cite scripture well, you must cite passages *exactly* : Nothing does more harm than a passage mutilated. I do not mean by this, that you must cite entire passages at full length, it is sufficient to introduce so much of them as suits your purpose.

III. You must not cite too great a number of passages : The assistance of the scripture ought to be well managed, and you should not cite a great deal of it, except you are treating some point of great importance ; for if you are always doing it, it will soon make no impression*.

You may ask, *Whether you ought to cite not only the chapters, but also the verses from whence you take any thing.*

When you are treating common things, you should not cite the verse ; but if your subject

* I have heard a sermon that has been so overloaded with texts of scripture, that the thread of the reasoning was in a manner lost, and the whole looked like a piece of rich patch-work, without any ground appearing at the bottom. But the other extreme, of a penury of sacred texts, prevails too much in our modern and refined compositions, which for that reason may rather be called *orations* than sermons.—See Hort's Charge, p. 8.

be uncommon—as that of *Restitution*, it may be proper to say,—this is in such a chapter, and such a verse; but to do that, you must be well acquainted with scripture.

S E C T. V.

Remarks on STILE.

WHAT I have hitherto offered you, respect the things you ought to attend to in revising your compositions. The remarks I am going to add, relate to the manner of expressing the things you have meditated.

A preacher must not neglect *externals*. The manner of saying things contributes greatly to gain them a reception. I begin with *Stile*, and here what I think most essential for you to observe is this :

I. Stile ought to arise from things themselves, rather than from study and labour. If therefore you conceive clearly what you say, and are deeply penetrated with it, you will always express it well : all the passions are eloquent, *Nam ita fiet, ut ex plenitudine pectoris verba fundat quæ, quia ipsa rerum natura, non dicentis industria, suppeditat, amoto omni verborum tumore sine ullâ hyperbole, rebus non secus ac vestis corpori aptissimè adhærebunt : erit in illius stilo virile quoddam robur, ac plenæ sententiarum voces, quæ rerum non tam signa erunt, quam vividæ quædam*

quædam, & expressæ imagines: GAUSSENUS, page 235.

II. Style ought to be *pure, clear, and exact*; for this purpose it is necessary to have clear ideas of what you would say. You must also understand language. For this end, you should read remarks upon language, and books that are well written. To this you ought to apply while you are young; for when once you have formed a habit of speaking ill, you will not easily get rid of it.

You must not, however, by any means make style your capital point, nor employ yourselves in nothing but reading fashionable books, under the pretence of their being well written. Observe herethe advice I would give you for acquiring a good style: When you meet with any beautiful passages in books, make an extract of them, and every now and then, read over again the passages you have copied out. By doing this, you will insensibly acquire the habit of thinking nobly, and writing purely.

III. The style of the pulpit ought to be grave and that it may be so, you ought to form it upon that of the sacred scripture, and piety. There are many phrases which may be very well in conversation but in the pulpit would be too familiar. I say the same of certain fashionable words, and of new and singular terms. Observe, that when you are speaking upon *impurity*, you must be very careful lest any thing escape you that may excite impure ideas—or that has the least favour of gallantry.

IV.

IV. Stile ought to be simple, and natural. It must be so, that the people may understand it. There are many ways of transgressing this Simplicity—such as the following—

1. When you hunt too much for your words, and phrases. If I were obliged to choose either a careless, or a bombast stile, I should be better pleased with a preacher for falling into a careless stile, if it was natural, than for displaying too much art.

2. When you hunt after bon-mots—quibbles—puns, &c. this is the fault of shallow geniuses.

3. You offend in this point, when you make use of a pompous, lofty, and brilliant stile. It is even a crime to indulge in it.

4. When you may make use of certain turns that are too refined, and remote from common language. You may use them upon some occasions, but they should ever be banished from the pulpit. Mr. La Placette has fallen into this fault.

5. When you make use of expressions that are above the capacity of the people*, as are terms of science. For instance, the people by no means understand the words—*dispensation*—*economy*—*idea*, &c. They know nothing of terms of painting, and therefore they should be

* “Terms and phrases may be familiar to you, which are quite unintelligible to them; and I fear this happens much oftener than we suspect; therefore guard against it. Your expressions may be very common without being low; yet employ the *lowest*, provided they are not ridiculous, rather than not be understood.”—Secker’s Charges, p. 296.

banished from the pulpit as much as possible; and when you are obliged to use them, it is proper to explain them.

6. Over-straining things, and indulging in hyperboles is transgressing against this simplicity. Nothing ought to be more cautiously avoided than exaggerations. I do not therefore approve the custom of those preachers, who, having some fine subject to treat, instantly exalt it above all other texts of scripture. You ought to be much on your guard against all these things.

LECTURE IV.

S E C T. I.

Of ELOQUENCE.

I HAVE already given you some instructions on the subject of style, but it is natural that I should say something on Eloquence. I might tell you that it arises from the rules I have given you, and consists in following piety and good sense. I might, I say, content myself with this, but, however, I will add a few words more on this subject.

I. I say then that to attain the *true* Eloquence you must renounce the *false*, which consists in false ornaments—a loud voice—a pompous style, &c*. When you confine yourselves solely to these things, you are not eloquent, because there is nothing in them which flows from the heart. There is also a false Eloquence, in being ambitious of saying every thing with spirit, and turning all things with

* The curious reader may see the subject of this section handled in a very copious and elegant manner, in a book entitled, “Christian Eloquence in Theory and Practice.”

delicacy. By this you may acquire the title of a *pretty preacher*, but you will never convert a soul, nor even please people of solid judgment. Moreover, there is some conscience to be used in this case; for a hearer's attention is by these means too much drawn off to outside shew; whereas you ought to make him relish the reflections you advance. If then you would attain to true Eloquence, you must first lay aside the passion for appearing eloquent. You must not hunt after praise and reputation. So long as you have those vain ambitious views, you will never preach well—and you will never become truly eloquent.

II. You must confine yourselves to the simplicity of the gospel. There is nothing so noble as that manly Eloquence which we find in the gospel, and throughout the whole scripture. There are passages in the prophets which could not be more eloquent. Likewise in the Epistles 1 Cor. xi.—1 Tim. vi. &c. you meet with passages so grand that nothing can equal them.

III. Eloquence does not always consist in the force and grandeur of the things you speak, but it likewise appears in mildness and simplicity; *that* is eloquent which insinuates and persuades. Now you may persuade more easily by mildness, than by vehemence. *Qui semper movet, nunquam movet.* You must not therefore always pique yourselves upon being pathetic, for by this you will so accustom your

hearers to those strong passages, that when you want to move, you will be able to do it no more. See the causes of corruption, Part II. Chap. III.

S E C T. II.

Of the MEANS to make an audience attentive.

IT is not sufficient to be eloquent; to that eloquence you must join certain turns that may make the hearers attentive, and awaken them: the means of gaining yourselves Attention is to say good things—to speak them with order and precision; in a word, to practise the preceding rules.

But what I would observe here relates rather to the manner of saying things, than to the things themselves. For many preachers say good things, and yet are not attended to. Take a good discourse, and one man who shall give it a certain turn will make himself attended to, whereas the same discourse will make no figure from the mouth of another. Now in order to secure a hearer in such a manner that he may not escape you, there is need of great natural parts. It is not easy to describe in what they consist; it is a certain *je ne sçai quoi* that cannot be reduced to art. *Caput artis est decere, quod tamen unum est quod tradi arte non potest, CICERO.* I shall, however,

give you some precepts that may be useful for you to practise.

I. When you have any thing of importance to propose to your hearers, it is proper to apprize them of it. You may, for instance, make use of the following method of speaking, *If you have heard me hitherto, you ought now to redouble your attention; what I am going to say to you concerns you very nearly, &c.* Such methods rouse the curiosity of the hearers, and prevent them from distraction: see GAUSSEN, p. 279.

II. Parentheses are excellent means of awakening the attention. For example, when speaking of drunkenness, you might say suddenly with an elevated voice, without the hearers were attending to it—*It is reported that there are many of those who hear me, that are addicted to this vice—whether that report be true, I know not, God knoweth; but if it be, I pray God to have compassion on those persons for Jesus Christ's sake, &c.* and then you may calmly resume the thread of your discourse. This would not fail of raising the attention of the audience. GAUSSEN, page 280.

III. You may make use of digressions. When they are ill-placed, they cannot but do harm; but when they are seasonably introduced, they engage an audience surprizingly. When you are desirous of using them, you should observe these three things.—1. That they are rare.—2. You must apprize your hearers, that you are going to make them.—3. You must not use them but upon important occasions.

IV.

IV. To these means which Mr. Gaussen points out, some others might be added—as citing some histories from scripture: when these histories are well applied, they please exceedingly.

V. Good transitions produce a good effect; when you pass on in a dry manner from one head to another, it takes off much from the grace of your discourse.

VI. A sixth method which appears to me very proper for raising the attention, is the using of *interrogations*; they strike exceedingly. St. CHRYSOSTOM made frequent use of them.

VII. You must endeavour to enter well into the minds of your hearers. If you succeed in that, you will infallibly gain their attention. You must study yourselves with great application, to find out the secret of entering into the minds of your hearers, and preventing their objections and scruples. For this purpose you must frequently meditate upon yourselves, and other men; read good books, &c.

VIII. Besides all these things which respect the discourse itself, there are still other means that may be profitably employed, and consist in the manner of your delivery. Such are frequent variations of the voice. *Attentio nullâ re magis quam recurrente sæpius orationis similitudine retunditur, nullâ contra magis quàm varietate excitatur.* GAUSSEN, page 276.

But you must take care that those variations be always proportioned, and suited to the nature of the things you are speaking. Pauses also greatly

contribute to raise the attention of an audience; gesture produces the same effect. All these means, though externals, ought not to be neglected, and they are of greater importance than many imagine.

S E C T. III.

Of PRONUNCIATION and GESTURE.

WITH respect to Pronunciation and Gesture I must refer you to Mr. LE FAUCHEUR *, who has written an excellent treatise on that subject: I shall offer you only three remarks.

I. The first regards the opinion of many, who think that externals may be neglected, and that to study them is a desire of pleasing men: this would be very true, if God and nature had given us all things in perfection. But since nature has been depraved by bad habits, it is proper to reform her. With respect to the pleasing of men, if that were the only end we proposed, it would be a great crime. But if we are persuaded we do more good by any particular method of speaking, it would

* This celebrated treatise will be read with peculiar pleasure and advantage by every gentleman of a classical taste and education: it has met with the highest commendations from some of the most eminent preachers in our own language: it was translated into English, and the second edition of it published at London, 1727, 12mo, Intituled, "*The Art of speaking in Public.*"

be ridiculous, and, I think, even sinful, not to adopt it.

II. The second thing you ought to observe is—that you are faulty in point of Gesture, whenever you make too much use of it, this arises from students, at the first setting out, thinking that it is necessary to use Gestures; and not knowing how to manage them; they do it at random, and thus they contract a bad habit, and fall into extravagance. There is more gravity in using little, than in using much. Besides a preacher, who does not use much of it, commonly strikes his audience the more, whenever he does use it.

III. The third observation I would make to you, and which is a general one, is this—that the best things you can follow in this respect, are devotion and nature, or to say all in a word, —to follow the emotions of the heart. In order to deliver things in a proper manner, you must suffer the heart to act, unless you have learned any bad habits; for in that case there is a necessity for study and pains to correct yourselves; but you are at a time of life, in which you have not yet contracted vicious habits.

S E C T. IV.

*Of the time that ought to be employed on the
COMPOSITION of a SERMON.*

WHEN you engage in Composition, you should employ a reasonable time in it. You should spend neither too little, nor too much upon it.

I. I say not *too little*, because you ought to give yourselves time to meditate—to put down your meditations in writing, and to revise them. You must give yourselves this trouble. You must be well on your guard against idleness. When once you give way to that, you will have recourse to bad reasons to authorize it; such as this, for instance, “*That there is no need of so much preparation for preaching the gospel.*” In which there is something of truth, but it cannot be admitted here. *Ita assequor ut alio tempore cogitem. Cic. de Orat.*

II. You must not employ *too much* time, because, 1. That will make you idle; you will do nothing but with difficulty, and you will be discouraged, if you have the least inclination to indolence. 2. You will lose a great deal of time. A minister ought to manage his time well, so that he may always have enough left for the other duties of the ministry, and for his studies. I do not therefore approve of the advice which some ministers (and particularly those of France) give their students in divinity, “*to spend a great deal of time upon the Composition* of

of their pieces." Two or three days are sufficient for a minister that is in practice: when therefore you would apply to it, apply all at once: you will reap this advantage from it, that you will exert your imagination, and accustom yourselves to compose readily.

But, you will say, *what are the means of being always ready to compose something to fill up a sermon, in so little time?* It is this—to study and meditate a long time before-hand; and when any thoughts occur to you upon a subject, to put them down in writing, that you may find them in their proper time.

S E C T. V.

Of the LENGTH *of* SERMONS.

L E N G T H in Sermons is certainly a fault; * and whatever some may say, be assured that long Sermons are tiresome. Besides, it dispirits the hearers. There may, perhaps, be found in a congregation, some person that will tell you they are not tired, in spite of the length of Sermons; but if there are a dozen that speak in this manner, all the rest of the congregation will speak otherwise. Moreover, it is impossible to retain a long Sermon well.

* It would be well if some prolix preachers—especially those who harangue their hearers *extempore*, would duly remember and apply the observation of the famous LUTHER on this point—"One of the qualities, or properties of a preacher, is to know when to make an end."

If the Sermon you preach is not a good one, it cannot be too short; and if it be a good one, you ought to preserve the ascendancy you have gained over the mind of your hearers; for after three quarters of an hour the attention flags; you must not cram people to disgust, under the pretence of feeding them.

Observe here another reason of conscience, which should oblige you to be short, that is, the place and rank which Sermons hold in divine service; they are only an interruption of it. You ought therefore to reserve the attention of your hearers, for the prayers that are offered up after the Sermon, and for the singing of psalms.

If you preach a long time, you dispirit your audience—you put them out of temper, and so they are unfit for praying to God; besides, in a large congregation, there are always some infirm people. You should have a little regard for the church of God.

The usual Length of a Sermon should be about three quarters of an hour*, on a Sunday; on week days between half an hour and three-quarters; on sacrament days it should be shorter than usual; on fast days, it may be somewhat longer.

* “The Length of Sermons, though it should always be moderate, may be very different at different times; only give no room to think, that in a short one you have said but little; or in a long one have said any thing that was not pertinent, or dwelt upon any thing beyond what was needful.” SECKER’S *Charges*, p. 294.

If you examine the sermons and homilies of the ancient fathers of the church, you will find they were but half an hour long *; you will scarcely meet with any of an hour.

There are three principal causes of the Length of Sermons :

The first is that preachers do not attend to the rules I have been giving you, which regard precision.

The second is, that they have false ideas either of theology or of preaching: they fancy, that in order to preach well, they have nothing to do but to load their sermons well.

The third is, that they spend too much time in their exordium and preliminary remarks; if they would retrench them, they would be much shorter, and yet retrench nothing material: hold it therefore as a maxim, to enter immediately upon your subject. Thus I have gone through the subject of preaching in general.

* Their sermons were often very short. There are many in St. AUSTIN's tenth Tome, which a man may pronounce distinctly, and deliver decently, in eight minutes; and some almost in half the time, and such are many of those of *Leo Chrysologus*, *Maximus*, *Casarius Arelatensis*, and other *Latin* fathers: some of St. Austin's are much longer, and so are the greater part of *Chrysostom's*, *Nazianzen's*, *Nyssen's* and *Basil's*; but scarcely any of them would last an hour, and many not half the time. See BINGHAM's *Antiquities*, B. xiv. ch. iv. § 21.—In bishop Burnet's judgment, half an hour is in general a sufficient Length for a sermon, *Pastoral Care*, ch. ix.

S E C T. VI.

Particular RULES for the different kinds of SERMONS: and first of those in which SCRIPTURE is explained.

AS there are two sorts of Sermons—the one of *Homilies*, or those in which scripture is explained—the other of those which are properly called *Sermons*, and treat of some particular subject; it is proper to consider the Rules that ought to be observed in both of them.

To begin first with those in which scripture is explained. The Rules I would offer you are these following:

Ist. The Rule is to understand the design of the text. Before you consider what may be said on the subject you have in hand, you should understand the design of it. For this purpose, you should never consider the text in itself, but observe on what occasion, and with what intention it was delivered. You should attend to what precedes, and what follows the text; in a word, to the whole connection of a discourse; examine who was the speaker, to whom the discourse was addressed, in what circumstances, &c. If, for instance, you were to explain the epistles of St. Paul to the *Romans*, and *Galatians*, you should always remember well, that the apostle had in view those Chris-

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tians that were for joining to the gospel, the ceremonies of the law.

II. The second Rule is to read the text in the original; the versions are faulty in many passages. The histories are faithfully translated, because they are simple things. But in the prophetic, and doctrinal parts, our versions are very often erroneous. The Psalms, the Proverbs, and above all, the book of Job, are very ill translated: I mean not by this to blame our versions, but only to inform you, that when you would explain the scripture you ought to read it in the original language. The New Testament is better translated than the Old, because the Greek has more affinity to our language. But notwithstanding this, you ought to observe this rule as well with regard to the *New* Testament as the *Old*.

III. A third Rule which I must repeat to you is, that you must do all you possibly can by yourselves: you should employ your own knowledge to do something, and let the plan, at least, be of your own invention. See GAUSSEN. On this subject, you must read the scripture well, to see in what sense the methods of speaking are figurative. In this view I must tell you, that concordances are of great assistance and use, and it is allowable to make use of them. *Non prius commentatores adeat, quàm ipse aquâ hæreat*, GAUSSEN, p. 28. The best are those of KIRCHER in Greek, and likewise of H. STEPHENS, in Greek, upon the New Testament, and the dictionary of MARINUS BRIXIANUS

BRIXIANUS in Hebrew; there are also in Latin the *Concordantiæ Biblicæ majores*, which are excellent.

IV. Rule. When you have thus done of yourselves all you are able, it is then allowable to make use of commentaries. I have three things to observe to you on this head:

1st, You must consult them principally with these two views. 1. When there is any thing in a text which you cannot understand without another's assistance—as for instance, historical facts—articles of criticism—or Jewish customs, &c. 2. In order to see if you have omitted nothing essential. Sometimes you may be assured that you have succeeded in your compositions, but at other times you may be in doubt whether you have said every thing, or whether you might not be more precise; and it is on these occasions, that you may seek for *illustrations* in commentaries.

2. You must make a good choice of them. See what I have said on this point in my *Treatise of the Causes of Corruption*, Part II. Cause 7. I shall here only observe one thing, which is this—that those which are short, and explain the literal sense of scripture are the best. CALVIN is one of the most judicious commentators we have. BULENGER is excellent. The homilies of GUALTHER may be read with advantage. As to the moderns, there is Grotius who is excellent. The *Critici minores* are also very good, but they should be read with judgment. *Paraphrases* are likewise good. That of

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ERASMUS on the New Testament has been always admired. He has however one fault—he indulges too much *genius* and affectation of politeness in his language and sentiments. Those of LAUNAY and HAMMOND have also their value.

3. The use that ought to be made of commentaries is not to copy them out as some persons do—and deliver from the pulpit all they find in them; but you ought to use them for your own instruction in such a manner as to make them your own. For this purpose, you must examine things well. I do not approve of a preacher's giving the people an account of all he has read, the people have nothing to do with all that.

V. Rule. You ought not to relate in the pulpit the different explications that may be given of a term. You should determine for yourself—choose the sense which appears to you the best—and make your sermon upon it. In relating different senses, you raise scruples in the minds of your audience—and run out into a tedious length.

I except, however, some cases: for instance, in obscure and remarkable texts in which there is matter for doubt, you cannot well avoid relating the different explications and meanings which are usually given of them. This must be done more especially, when there are passages to which you would give a different sense from that, which is commonly given of them; as, if you were to explain those words of St.

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Matthew xii. 36. where it is said that men shall give an account of *idle words*, &c. You should then remove the scruples that may be entertained on that subject.

It is also lost labour, to tell in what sense a term is taken. You are not obliged to give an account of every thing, notwithstanding many preachers do it. This comes from their fancying that they must say every thing about every word of a text.

VI. Rule. You should banish from the pulpit, the generality of *critical* and grammatical observations.

They are what the people understand nothing about, as they belong to philology. I allow that you may make these observations in your study—but I would not have you give an account of your studies in the pulpit.

Sometimes when a text is obscure, and may be cleared up by a critical or grammatical remark, it may then be done. As, for instance, there is a passage in Matthew xxviii. 8, 9. in which criticism is necessary. This passage is not found in JEREMIAH, as St. MATTHEW says, but in ZECHARIAH. This may be cleared up by observing, that the Jews gave the name of JEREMIAH to the whole volume of the prophets, as Lightfoot has shewn.

VI. The seventh rule is this—that you must not insist much upon terms. By this I mean two things, the first of which regards the explication of terms and the other the force of them.

First,

First, You should not always explain terms.

Such as are clear of themselves, have no occasion for it. Such as are obscure, should not always be explained.

The term *Pharisee*, for instance, ought not to be always explained, though it may be obscure. If I were preaching upon the gospel, the first time I met with that word, I would explain it; I might also do it briefly, the second and third time, in order to refresh the memory; but after that, I would say no more about it. In like manner the word *Mystery* is found in *Ephes. i. 9.*—and *vi. 19.* If I were preaching upon the first of these passages, it would be proper to explain the word *Mystery*, because that is the place for it; but not if I were explaining the second. You may apply this rule to many other passages. In general, nothing is so insipid as to attach yourselves to words—you should keep to essentials.

Secondly, With respect to the force of terms, several preachers found many reflections on the force of terms, which are not comprehended in them: the sacred writers spake and wrote with great simplicity: to avoid this rock, you must have some judgment, and a knowledge of languages, and the stile of authors.

Hold it therefore as a maxim not to *press* terms, but keep yourselves to essentials. If you would do it in the Psalms where the word *eternal* is occurring every minute, where would you be?

VIII. Rule. You should discern in a text what has need of an explanation, and what has not. There are two maxims to be observed on this subject :

The first is, to see whether there are some things that evidently stand in need of explanation, and of which it may be supposed the people have no knowledge, such as historical facts, &c. But when things are of themselves intelligible, it is proper to pass them over. This I apply to texts themselves. There is a great number which the people understand at your mere reading them. Were you to employ yourselves in explaining them, you would necessarily be *saying* useless things. But on these occasions it is proper to shew their truth, or their use, and to make proper reflections upon them. If, for instance, you had to explain those words of St. James, i. 2. *Count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations*, you might give an explanation of them in eight or ten sentences; but it would be proper to shew, that we ought to count it joy—and great joy, when we are not exposed to temptations; you should not therefore hold it as a maxim—to be willing to explain every thing.

The second maxim is, to observe every thing that is proper to be explained: there are some passages which you should pass lightly over, though they may want explaining. If, for instance, I were to explain the first chapter to the Romans, though the crimes which St. PAUL mentions

mentions have need of explanation, I would however say nothing concerning their nature. I would content myself with observing, that they are too shocking to be dwelt upon in the pulpit. But I would make it my business to shew in what abominations men live, when they follow their lusts. When therefore you are engaged in such kinds of subjects, it is not proper to indulge in explanations, but you should insist upon the motives, which ought to dissuade men from such vices.

IX. Rule. You should always keep to the literal sense as much as you can; that is almost always the best.

I do not mean by this to banish all allegorical and mystical senses. But you should be very cautious, and keep to the ideas which the text presents to the mind, and which arise from the train of the discourse. Prolix commentators often fall into the fault of seeking out some mystery, where there is none at all. But to prevent your seeking after a mystical sense injudiciously, you should never consider a detached text, but always follow the thread of a discourse, and that will keep you from making digressions. That you may understand my sentiments rightly, observe what it is that I condemn:

1st, Those who give two, or more senses to a text—admit them all—and explain them separately, as Mr. Moore does in his sermon upon Matthew xxiv. 28. He first explains that text of the *Romans*, and afterwards of the

Mystic Eagles. I am well aware, that one may consider a text in different views; but I say,

2dly, That it is one thing to apply a text in different views, and another to give it several meanings; there is always but one; when for instance, one is preaching upon the Psalms, in which David speaks of the deliverances that God had granted him, one may apply them to the deliverances that God will grant his children, to those which he will grant at the last day, &c. but the first sense is the true; and a man would be mistaken if he were to say, that David intended to point out other senses. You must not therefore confound explications with applications.

X. Rule. When you would explain a text, you should endeavour to understand what is the most essential matter it contains. For this purpose, you ought first to examine a text by the light of good sense, and endeavour to distinguish rightly betwixt the accessory and the principal, in order that you may keep to the essential: when you do not this, you lose a great deal of time unprofitably; you stop at preliminaries which are of no use; and when you ought to come to the principal point, the time destined for the action is nearly exhausted. Then being pressed you have no time to dwell upon it, and pass lightly over the subject. You ought therefore never to dwell upon any thing except the principal point in the text, and to understand that rightly, you must remember this rule; namely, that you should know how

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to limit yourselves, and not be desirous of saying every thing.

XI. Rule. You should avoid such questions and objections as are useless: on this head I have observed, that you should propose objections fairly, and resolve them clearly; but this regards the explication of scripture. When you engage yourselves in many questions, your hearers do not follow you; or if they attend to you, they do not remember what you have been saying: this, however, is a fault too common with preachers, and proceeds from these two causes:

The first is, that they are destitute of good sense and judgment. People of good sense never amuse themselves with such trifles. *Aquila non captat muscas.*

Secondly, It sometimes arises from an affectation of appearing learned. They commonly exhaust themselves in useless conjectures. If a man of little sense were to treat on Matth. xv. 21. he would stop at preliminaries, and examine why Jesus Christ went to Sidon and Tyre, &c. whereas it is always proper to consider the text in simple views.

These are the principal rules that ought to be followed in the explanation of scripture. But as there are different kinds of sermons in which scripture is explained—as texts of miracles and history---texts of parables and prophecies---and those which contain pious emotions---likewise texts of morality and doctrine, I shall proceed in my next Lecture to give you some particular rules for each kind of sermons.

LECTURE V.

S E C T. I.

Of TEXTS of MIRACLES and HISTORY.

I BEGIN this Lecture with Texts of Miracles and History: these two kinds of texts are nearly the same thing, and nearly the same rules are to be observed for both, because all the Miracles are Histories. There is a great deal of judgment requisite in treating them.

I. The first rule that ought to be observed in these texts is this---to explain them all entire as much as possible, and to go on apace with them; these texts do not appear well, except they are collected together: they should not therefore be divided, unless you have some particular views in them.

II. Rule. In these texts you should confine yourselves to things, and not to words: I do not mean that you should never stop upon words, for if they are difficult, or if they are allusions to customs of the Jews, or any other people, it is right to explain them. But there is no occasion to dwell much upon terms, because the
narrative

narrative of Histories is very simple. It would therefore be losing time to dwell much upon them.

III. Rule. Since it is not proper to dwell upon terms, these texts rather require reflections than explanations: Histories are commonly pretty clear, and serve only as materials for reflections.

IV. Rule. To know on what your reflections ought to turn, you should attend to the circumstances of the History you are to treat, and carefully distinguish the accessory from the principal, in order to dwell always upon essentials.

If, for instance, you were to explain the beginning of the viiith chapter of St. MATTHEW, you should not stop upon those words ---“*When he was come down from the mountain,*” because that is not at all essential. You will doubtless perceive that I make this reflection, because it is a fault into which many writers fall.

V. Rule. With respect to the uses that should be drawn from these texts---they ought to be sometimes doctrinal, and sometimes moral. But particularly when they are texts of Miracles, you should never forget to draw some uses from them, to confirm the Christian religion.

S E C T. II.

Of TEXTS of Allegories and Parables.

I Design here to speak of Allegories—similitudes---and every thing that may be called a comparison---type---parable, &c. These texts ought to be treated very judiciously; and they are usually the rock on which those preachers split, who have not good sense.

I. It is not with *these* texts as with histories, which are clear, for these texts want to be explained. It is often proper to stop at words ---but however, you should not dwell long upon them. With respect to similitudes, it is not necessary to say from whence they are taken. But since in these similitudes there are some allusions taken from foreign customs, it is right to explain them. If, for instance, you were to explain the *parable of the virgins*---it would be proper to observe, that it was an ancient custom for the young people to go forth before the bridegroom, about midnight, with lamps, &c.

II. It is proper to confine yourselves to the things signified, by coming immediately to the principal design of the parable or comparison, and not to dwell long upon circumstances which serve merely for ornament. There is in all parables or similitudes a certain point of view, to which you ought to confine yourselves, and pass over what serves only as it were for ornament.

ornament. This may be explained by the comparison of a picture, in the border of which many things may be placed ; but in order to judge of its beauty, you must confine your attention to the principal object. For example, in the *Parable of the prodigal son*, there is a passage, in which it is said, that when the eldest son approached the house, and heard dancing, he was offended, &c. This is not the place for enquiring what those dances signified, and why he was offended at them. That is a circumstance which you ought not to stop at.

III. You ought never to press these kinds of texts too far : notwithstanding some preachers know not how to give over, when once they get hold of a type. They are fond of applying to Jesus Christ, even the least ornaments of the Jewish priests in their sacrifices : when they meet with a passage where Christ is called *Bread*, they will begin with telling you how bread is made. *The grain* (say they) *is put into a mill, then the meal is kneaded in the trough, afterwards the dough is baked in the oven, &c.* Thus (say they) *was Jesus Christ bruised, he was kneaded with afflictions* : whereas without stopping thus to subtilize upon it, they should say that Jesus Christ is called *bread*, because he nourishes our souls, just as much as bread nourishes our bodies : it is the same with respect to manna. All the Allegories that are made upon this subject are mere conceits of wit, from which the people reap no edification.

S E C T. III.

Of TEXTS of PROPHECIES.

I HAVE three maxims to offer you upon these kinds of Texts.

I. You must not put in the rank of Prophecies any thing but what is really a Prophecy. There are some authors that turn all the Old Testament into Prophecies: you must rank in the number of Prophecies, only those passages which are so ranked by the Holy Spirit, and cited in the New Testament; or which so evidently relate to Jesus Christ, that one cannot avoid acknowledging them as Prophecies.

II. You ought to establish the sense of a Prophecy before you shew the accomplishment of it. I remark this, because these kinds of texts are almost always expressed in figurative and obscure terms. In *Historical* Texts almost all the versions agree with each other; but with respect to Prophecies it is quite otherwise. Hence you should conclude that there is something obscure, and consequently that the knowledge of language is necessary. But when the sense is clear, you should immediately proceed to the accomplishment.

III. You ought to shew the accomplishment of a Prophecy so clearly and visibly, that your audience cannot doubt but it has been accomplished.

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When you treat these Texts, you ought to draw two kinds of uses from them.

1. For combating the JEWS. For instance, it would be very proper to establish against them that of Isaiah, Chap. vii. But since *these* are things which the people by no means understand, you must not dwell upon them.

2. For combating ATHEISTS. You should omit no opportunity of establishing the *truth* of religion; and in my judgment there is no clearer proof of the existence of God, and the truth of christianity, than Prophecy, but this subject should be well handled.

S E C T. IV.

Of TEXTS *containing* EMOTIONS *of* PIETY.

THOSE Texts which contain Emotions of Piety, such as those of the PSALMS for the most part are, ought not to be treated entirely as others are.

I. You should not stop long upon terms, because the language of Piety is a simple stile, and you must not reason much upon it: however, in Texts from the OLD TESTAMENT, it is proper to have regard to terms, because our versions do not always translate the original well.

II. You should keep close to the sense of a Text, and to the principal emotions expressed in

in it. For instance, you often find in a verse several different expressions which signify the same thing; you should not take them separately, but say, this points out in general such a thing.

III. In order to succeed well in these texts, you must enter well into the *spirit* of the person who is speaking; put yourselves in the same place and circumstances with him and attend to the emotions which occur to you. But this will avail you nothing, if you have not *Piety* yourselves, and have not actually experienced what *devotion* is.

IV. It should be your principal endeavour to make you audience enter into the Emotions you are recommending to them, and this regards the application. You should manage so, as to inspire them with those sentiments even in the explication.

S E C T. V.

Of TEXTS *of* DOCTRINE *and* MORALITY.

I SHALL not spend much time in speaking to you about these texts. With respect to Texts of Doctrine.

I. You ought to choose your subjects well.

II. When you have chosen them, your great study should be clearness and simplicity.

III. When you explain them, you must not intermix affecting passages, and indulge the pathetic; for when you instruct, you should do it simply.

IV.

IV. You must discuss your subjects as far as is necessary for elucidating the Text, or for the design you propose in it. Otherwise you will fall into common-place, *unless* you are desirous of going to the bottom of your subject.

With respect to Texts of Morality, they are in general the most useful, and it is proper to explain them often to the people. You should also more be copious upon them: for Morality requires to be treated with greater extent than Doctrine. This is a subject on which I shall proceed to speak to you more particularly.

S E C T. VI.

Of SERMONS which treat on some particular subjects.

I HAVE hitherto spoken to you of homilies, or Sermons, in which the scripture is explained.

It is now my design to speak to you of another species of Sermons, properly called *Sermons* in the ancient church, in which the text they took served only as a pretext for the subject they intended to handle. I shall not dwell largely on this kind of Sermons, because the generality of the rules which we have already given, may be applied here.

In general you ought not to dwell long upon the explication of the texts. You should take their sense for granted, and immediately communicate the design you propose. If, however, there

there should be any thing that may throw light upon what you are going to advance, you may explain your Texts, but very briefly, and then proceed immediately to the design of it.

The subjects which you treat in these Sermons are of two kinds—they are either of doctrine, or of morality ; I shall proceed to speak of them both.

S E C T. VII.

Of SERMONS *on doctrinal Subjects.*

I. Rule. **W**HEN you would treat upon some doctrine, you ought to choose the most important. Hence I very much approve of preaching upon *the truth of the Christian Religion—upon the Resurrection—upon the last Judgment, &c.* which are weighty subjects, and lead men to piety. I cannot therefore approve of insisting upon abstract, and difficult subjects—such as *the decrees—predestination, &c.* on which men may easily make an ill use of their curiosity.

II. Rule. You ought to establish well the doctrines you take in hand ; you must establish well their nature, give clear and just ideas of them, that the people may understand what you intend to teach them ; but it is proper also to shew the necessity, or truth of them. Others there are whose nature you must explain. Sometimes you must explain both, I mean both the truth and nature of them. If for instance, I
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were to preach upon the *Resurrection*, I should think it proper to establish principally the truth of it, and to demonstrate that there will necessarily be a resurrection.

III. Rule. In order to establish a doctrine well, you must use proofs that are clear and simple, and have no recourse to far fetched ones. The most simple proofs are always the best, and you should never pique yourselves upon saying extraordinary things.

IV. Rule. You should make this difference between subjects of doctrine, and those of morality, namely, that on the former you should be more concise than on the latter. For every man, possessed of a little good sense and attention, will soon comprehend the truth you mean to teach them. "*Qui breviter dicunt, docere possunt*," says Cicero: but when the business is to touch the heart and move the passions, there is need of more time.

V. Rule. On subjects of doctrine you should consider whether there is no error to be refuted. If there be, you should do it with *solidity*. See what I have said elsewhere on this point. I shall only caution you against falling into these two faults.—1st, That of refuting errors unknown to the people —and 2dly, That of disputing without ceasing and without necessity, to which the German preachers are particularly addicted.

VI. The sixth Rule, which is the principal, is this,—that you must always treat doctrines with a view to their end,—I mean, that you

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must always refer them to the practice of piety and holiness.

S E C T. VIII.

Of SERMONS on moral subjects.

I SHALL be a little more copious on this species of Sermons, because they are more * important.

I. Rule. In texts of *Morality*, as in those of *Doctrine*, you ought to choose your subjects well: I will not here direct you what you should have regard to. I have already told you that there is a *general* utility, and a *particular* one, and that you must consult the necessities of your flock.

II. Rule. You must give a just idea of the virtue or vice, on which you intend to speak. Thus when you treat of any virtue, you must

* I am aware that some will be apt to take offence at the stress which our author lays on this species of Sermons, and the preference he gives them above others

Those preachers who insist on *moral duties*, are frequently censured in these days as *legal preachers*.

To such as are disposed to deny the propriety, or necessity of preaching up *moral duties*, I would recommend the perusal of a few pages in an Author, who is rigidly orthodox, and strenuous for the grand doctrines of the Christian faith, and the articles of our established church. See Dr. EDWARDS's *Preacher*, p. 54—66. This learned author warmly recommends Archbishop TILLOTSON as a most eminent preacher on *moral subjects*, though he has censured him severely enough on other accounts. Yet, after all, I cannot but express my earnest wishes that every preacher in our churches would duly remember the excellence of Christian morality above pagan virtue, lest his Sermons should degenerate into mere moral harangues; and TULLY's *Offices* and SENECA's *Epistles* should serve him (as Dr. EDWARDS complains they have served many) instead of the *Bible*.

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shew clearly and exactly what are its characters, and how far it should be extended. It is the same with vices. You see clearly that in morality you must be a little extensive. General descriptions will serve no purpose. When, for example, you are speaking of *Avarice*, you must do it in such a manner that all avaricious people may discover themselves in what you are saying. All that are avaricious are not so in the same manner. There are some who have only too parsimonious a disposition, others heap up riches in order to keep them, others in order to satisfy their luxury, or their lusts. You must therefore manage in such a manner, that one avaricious person may not throw off the fault from himself to another: you must be judicious, and never carry any point to extravagance. We are very apt to fall into this fault. Are you speaking of any duty? Never require from men more than God hath required from them; for if you exact any thing more from them, your hearers will *immediately* rise against you. With respect to vices too, you should avoid the maxims of an extravagant and too severe morality; let judgment and a spirit of mildness always be your guides.

III. Rule. When you have given the idea of the virtue or vice, which you intend speaking upon, you must propose the motives that ought to engage men to practise the virtue, or to shun the vice. The mere view of virtue should prevail with us to follow it; but as men are not sufficiently sensible to it, God shews us,

by his own conduct, that we ought to employ motives to lead them to it. But in order to know those which are capable of making the strongest impression, it is necessary to know the human heart well. To know what motives are fittest for the purpose, you must make serious reflections upon yourselves, and you must have experienced the force of those motives the gospel proposes. When you produce any motives, you should always choose the most powerful—those which are pointed out in the gospel*; such are those which are derived from our *Duty*, from our *Interest*, &c. but of this we shall speak in the application.

IV. Rule. You must give answers to the reasons of sinners. For this purpose you must endeavour to penetrate into their reasons, and find out by what pretences sinners would fain excuse themselves from their duty, and discover what it is that retains them in their corruption. For in proportion as you argue against a sinner, he argues immediately against you, and makes tacit objections, which you should endeavour to remove. But to know what those objections of sinners are, you must draw the knowledge of them from yourselves; for all the books in the world will serve to little, if any, purpose in this respect. You must also lay open certain false motives, which men use

* These reflections are sufficient to shew, that our Author thoroughly understood the difference of the gospel from pagan morality; and did not with a young divine should harangue his hearers in the same manner as a moral philosopher of Greece or Rome was used to do.

in order to exculpate themselves. A man shall have committed a crime, he will believe that provided he has, for instance, wept, prayed, and given alms, there is nothing further required of him, though perhaps he may have done all through false motives.

V. Rule. When you think you have convinced your hearers by the four methods I have mentioned, you must then shew them the means they ought to use for forming themselves to the practice of religious duties. It is very important to point out those means, as you may have experienced them. A man very often is sensible enough that he ought to renounce some bad habit, which he has contracted; but he feels himself weak, and knows not by what means he should retrieve himself. You should suppose that sinners have these same sentiments. It is therefore requisite that a minister should assist them upon these occasions. He should render piety easy, and he will always succeed in it, provided he follows the true spirit of the gospel. He must shew them, that in the beginnings of reformation God is contented with our good intentions and weak endeavours, provided they are sincere.

VI. Rule. You must propose and resolve some cases of conscience. This is an excellent means of touching your hearers; this makes their conscience tender; and when a man has a tender conscience, you may do every thing you wish with him. This point is greatly neglected,

ed, and it is evidently wrong to do so. These cases of conscience are more efficacious than censures. If, for instance, I were speaking to usurers, and should pass some direct censures upon them, and say to them—“*Unhappy men! if you do not make restitution, you will never be saved, &c.*” I should not produce so great an effect, as if, after having endeavoured to awaken their attention, I should say, You ask me “*Whether a man, who does such or such a thing, is in a state of salvation, and what he ought to do in the situation he is in?*” I answer “*Such and such a thing, &c.*” It is certain, that these indirect methods are oftentimes far more affecting. From all I have been saying you may observe in what manner you should make the application of these Sermons.

Sometimes it is proper to reserve their uses for the end, and sometimes not. If you think you have touched your hearers, conclude. But if there remains any thing further to be said in order to move them, make an application. You will not be able to treat subjects of morality well, without entering into *particulars*; be careful however of entering into an insipid detail, unbecoming the pulpit; that would occasion disgust among your hearers.

S E C T. IX.

Of Occasional SERMONS.

AMONGST the second species of Sermons I rank occasional Sermons. In these Sermons, which are made upon extraordinary occasions, as upon Fast-days—Sacrament-days—Preparation-days, &c. it is proper to follow nearly those rules which I have been giving you.

I. You should keep almost solely to the business of the day, and not to the text, unless that perfectly agrees with the occasion of your meeting. If the text absolutely relates to it, you may then keep to it: as, for instance, if upon a Sacrament-day I were to preach upon these words, “*Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup,*” 1 Cor. xi. 28. I might with propriety explain them.

II. As you must suppose that the people are on these occasions inclined to devotion, you had better omit every thing that is of too didactic a nature, and confine yourselves to application and exhortation. You should take advantage of the dispositions which circumstances have raised in the minds of your audience. You should inflame their zeal and devotion, assist them in forming good resolutions for the future, and encourage them to execute them.

III. You must be very careful not to give your people any false ideas, that may lead them to confine their devotion to the holy-days you are upon. They are naturally inclined to finish their devotion with the day you are celebrating. But if the people have been affected, you must *return to your charge* in the sequel, and manage so, that their piety, instead of being weakened, may gain new strength and go on perpetually increasing.

LECTURE VI.

S E C T. I.

Of the PARTS of a DISCOURSE.

Of the EXORDIUM.

IT now remains that I speak to you of the Parts of a Discourse: and to begin with the *Exordium*, the first enquiry is, *Whether it be always necessary to make an Exordium.* I am not willing to decide upon this subject; it is sometimes proper to make one; but after all, its use is very trifling. You should not dwell long upon it, because the least essential Part. *Exordium planè artem fatetur, nos autem omnia revocamus ad naturæ puros, & limpidissimos fontes,* GAUSSEN, page 276. ERASMUS was nearly of the same opinion, at least he inveighs bitterly against long and far-fetched *Exordiums*, page 214. He gives this reason for it—that the things, which a preacher has to say, are of themselves sufficiently important to raise the attention of the audience.

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The generality, however, of modern preachers are quite of another mind. Amongst others Mr. CLAUDE takes abundance of pains to shew the necessity of it, in which, however, he is mistaken. There are notwithstanding some occasions on which an Exordium is necessary:

1. When you preach upon extraordinary days.

2. When you preach in a strange church.

Excepting these, you need not be at the trouble of making one; the time that is spent upon an Exordium, is so much time lost both to the preacher and the people. When, however, you are desirous of making one, I think you ought to observe the following rules:

I. You should never begin the composition of your Discourse with the Exordium, you ought rather to finish with it. This is what CICERO did; and this was his reason for it—that in composing a Discourse many thoughts occur, which may be used for an Exordium.

II. If whilst you are meditating any thought proper for an exordium presents itself, seize it; but if no such occurs to you, never seek after one; for if you should labour for it, you will not succeed. One proof that Exordiums are very useless is this—that you are obliged to rack your brains to find them out. *Nam quod naturale est, sponte fluit.*

III. An Exordium should be short*; you must therefore never take it from things

* Several of our best divines entirely agree with our author on this point, “If an introduction be necessary, it should always be short, pertinent, and leading as soon as may be to the main subject of the discourse.” HORT’s *Charge*, p. 10, 11.

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that require elucidations and discussions; if you take one from an history, you must suppose your hearers know it, and content yourselves with refreshing their memory, and then apply it to your purpose.

IV. An Exordium should not be pompous, or contain any thing too far-fetched. I blame in that place a certain eloquence, which may come in very well elsewhere. It ought to be very *dispassionate*, and but little studied. *Exordium gravitatis plurimum habere debet; splendoris, festivitatis, concinnitudinis minimum.* CICERO.

V. You must not, without great necessity, take your Exordiums from too common comparisons and trite reflections.

VI. Lastly, You may begin your Discourse with mentioning the design you propose, or with the division of your subject; as does the author of the *Sermon on frequent communion*. Or else, if you are not willing to begin your discourse so abruptly, you may make use of some sentence of scripture. You may also take for the subject of your Exordium the circumstances that present themselves, as St. PAUL in the xviiith *Chapter of the Acts*. He begins his Discourse by telling the Athenians, that as he was passing along their streets he found an altar with this inscription—"TO THE UNKNOWN GOD;" and from thence takes occasion to tell them, *who was the true God, &c.* You may likewise take your Exordium from the transition and connexion. You should particularly do this,

this, when you are to explain any continued subject: sometimes you may take it from the importance of the subject, or from its usefulness or its difficulties, &c. The occasions on which you may omit Exordiums are these:

1. When you are explaining *continued* subjects, and are in your own church.
2. When you find nothing proper for them.
3. When you have a very copious subject; for then you ought to manage well the attention of your audience. I do not, however, mean, that you should always begin your Discourse drily.

S E C T. II.

Of the CONNEXION.

THE *Connexion* is not always necessary, and, unless it occurs of itself, it is not proper to make one. When, for instance, you preach upon any detached sentence that has a complete sense, you ought not to make one, no more than in movements of piety, in texts taken from the *Proverbs*, and near the end of all the *Epistles*. It is proper, however, to make *Connexions* on some occasions.

I. When they elucidate the text, and refer to something preceding it, as in Rom. viii. 1.

II. When you preach in a *continued* manner; but they must be short. Nothing is so tiresome as those long *Connexions* which recur to the

the beginning of a chapter, and even of an epistle.

S E C T. III.

Of the DIVISION.

IT is above all things proper to make Mr. CLAUDE's distinction, which is, that there is a difference betwixt the Division of a *discourse* and that of a *text*. When you find that in a text no natural Division occurs, it is useless to make one of it. There are, for instance, some sentences, which cannot well be divided; in that case it is sufficient to reduce them into propositions, and divide the discourse without dividing the text.

Now to judge when it is proper to divide a text, and when it is not so, it depends greatly upon the judgment and good sense of a preacher.

In general, it may be observed, that when you propose to instruct your hearers, and to give the explanation of the subject, it is proper to point out the order you intend to follow, to assist the attention and memory of your hearers; but this is not so necessary, when you propose only to exhort the people. The *Fathers* made but few Divisions; and hence it has always been remarked, that they are wanting in order. There are some texts which there is no occasion to divide; because every thing
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in them is placed in a natural order, it is sufficient to follow it. For example, in a history that is clear, there is no occasion for Division. For as the Division is a means of making the people follow a preacher better in his sentiments, that means is useless in a history, because things regularly succeed each other. There is nothing so easy as to follow a preacher step by step in every thing he advances, upon each part of a history. But there are likewise many subjects that must be divided. As there are several kinds of texts, there are also several kinds of Divisions, according to the different texts that may be treated. Of each kind of these texts we have already spoken; and therefore what we have said before, may supply what we omit here; and I shall content myself only with saying something *en passant*. There are, for instance, some texts which contain a *literal* sense and a *mystical* one; the Division of them is entirely made: upon texts of *Prophecies* you should first explain them, and then shew their accomplishment. On texts of *Parables*, you should begin with explaining briefly the thing from whence the comparison is drawn, and after that keep close to the thing signified. On texts, *which are expressed in obscure and figurative terms*, you should first clear up the obscure parts of them, and then proceed to the essential point. In texts *where perpetual allusion is made to some thing, or some fact*, as for instance, in the vith of St. JOHN, where there is an allusion to manna, you should give in a few words the history of manna, and then

then proceed to the application, and that should be the principal part of your discourse: there are likewise some texts which contain two senses — the one true, and the other false. The false sense is oftentimes the most common, and the most universally received. On the contrary, the true sense is the least known. In these cases you should first reject the ordinary and common sense, and then establish well the true one.

There are many preachers who divide some texts in several different views. See Mr. CLAUDE, *page* 168. This may be done provided the text may, and ought to be understood in all those different views. Otherwise it is not proper to do it, unless it be in the application; for there it is allowed, because we have more liberty. For example, in Psalm xxiii. where DAVID says, that “*God prepareth a table before him,*” it would be proper first to explain that text literally, and with respect to DAVID; but in the application, you might apply it differently. In short, where no order is absolutely discovered in texts, it is proper to reduce them into propositions.

Observe here, in general, how the different texts that occur may be divided. In sermons, where you are to treat any particular subject, the Division ought to be regulated according to the end you propose. It is not necessary for us to dwell upon this point, after what has been said upon it before. But in order to succeed well in these Divisions there are
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some rules which ought to be observed, and I will point them out to you.

I. Rule. You must conceive aright the particular end of a text, which properly constitutes the essential part of it; lest you should make that a part, which does not belong to the true end. This rule is transgressed by those preachers who attach themselves to terms, and are fond of speaking upon every word. For example, when it is said in the Acts, that "*through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven*," he that could make a point of treating *upon the kingdom of heaven* would greatly err. For, in that passage, the proper business is only to treat of *afflictions*; and it is not right to treat of other things on account of that text.

II. Rule. You should make your Division in such a manner that the first part may serve as a foundation for the second, and precede it *ordine naturæ*, so that you may not be obliged either to repeat or anticipate. This will infallibly be the case, when you do not make your division as you ought, and do not form yourself a coherent regular plan: for either you will say in the first part some things that belong to the second; or, on the other hand, you will repeat in the second something which you had already advanced in the first. This will not be the case, when you make your Division in the manner I have mentioned; every thing will be introduced in its proper place, and the whole be in right order. It must,

must, however, be observed, that there are some texts which cannot well be divided, and you will be obliged to use some repetitions upon them. It would be easy to point out several examples. This is observable more particularly in texts, where a second member is the consequence of the first, as Coloss. iii. 1, &c.

III. Rule. In dividing, you should avoid making too many parts *. You may sometimes make three, or four, and at the most, five, but never more. That would load a discourse too much, and render it obscure. This fault is observable in some of Mr. CLAUDE's Analyses: they are too much loaded. Add to this, that there is no text that may not be reduced into a smaller number of propositions.

IV. Lastly. Of all the parts of a discourse there is none that requires so much clearness, brevity, and simplicity, as this, because the whole depends upon the Division: if your hearers do not comprehend your Division, they will never be able to follow you. You should by no means imitate those, who pique themselves upon repeating the same Division in seve-

* I am aware, what objections have been warmly urged by some considerable writers on the subject of eloquence, against any formal express Divisions in a discourse. See *Christian Eloquence in Theory and Practice*, chap. vi. yet I am still disposed to think, that two or three Divisions may commonly be admitted and often found useful, both to fix the attention, and assist the memory of our hearers; I am supported in this opinion by the general practice of our best preachers, and by the particular observations of the excellent Archbishop HORT on this subject. (See his Charge, p. 7.)

ral different manners, and even by a playing upon words: this embarrasses the hearers, and is unbecoming the gravity of the pulpit: under this head of Division I shall proceed to say something upon subdivisions.

S E C T. IV.

Of SUBDIVISIONS.

SUBDIVISIONS are sometimes very useful and necessary, especially when any subject is explained. For example, if I were to preach upon the *Resurrection*, I should say, I will shew, 1st the truth, and 2dly the nature of it. Upon the first part I should make a Subdivision, and say, there are three or four proofs which establish this truth. And this would be requisite, in order to treat this subject well.

With respect to those things which divide of themselves, it is proper to shew their kinds, their degrees, &c. If, for example, I intended to treat of a vice or virtue, as of *charity*, I might say in general, that it requires us to love our neighbour; I should add, that it has several degrees. I should begin with the lowest degree, which is, 1st, The loving of those who love us. The 2d, is the loving of those who do not love us. The 3d, and the highest is—the loving of those who use us ill and resist the truth. It is useful to enter into this exact account. It must, however, be remarked in general, that it is not proper to make too many *Subdivisions*,

sions*, because the hearers cannot follow the preacher. Some pretend, by making many of them to clear the subject; and it happens quit otherwise, that they obscure it, and reduce it, as it were, to powder.

I would here distinguish between what a preacher should do for himself and his own private use, and what he should do in his public sermons. In private he may form to himself an order and method for Division and Subdivisions, but he should not display them openly: *caput artis est celare artem*: hence therefore you see that it is allowable to subdivide a part of your discourse, but not to subdivide a member of that part, much less the articles of that member.

S E C T. V.

Of the DISCUSSION.

THIS is the longest part of the discourse, but that, however, on which I shall be the least copious; because I have already spoken sufficiently about it all along, when I shewed you the manner of treating the different kinds of texts. I shall only add this one caution—when you have once divided your text

* Too many Subdivisions are to be found in many of Archbishop TILLOTSON's *Sermons*, and they have been justly censured for this fault, which was extremely prevalent in the preachers before his time.

in few words, you must come immediately to the grand business of it, and not leave your hearers, as some do, a long time in suspense about the manner of executing your design. To make preliminary remarks that are like second exordiums upon the first part, is a very bad custom: you give your hearers pleasure when you *treat them well*, and do not take up their time unprofitably.

S E C T. VI.

Of the APPLICATION.

IT remains for me to speak to you of the Application, which is the last part of a discourse, and, without contradiction, the most important and the most difficult. The Application is, if I may be allowed the expression, the preacher's rock: very few there are who succeed in it; and a good Application may be considered as a *chef d'oeuvre*. It is not with this part as with the explication; many acquit themselves tolerably well in the explication, who miscarry in the Application. The reason of this is obvious. You may, by the assistance of some good author, say what is proper for the explication of your text; but when you are to come to the Application, nothing but genius and piety can render you successful. It is then the heart alone must act: hence we find that this part of a discourse is, not only
 2 much

much neglected, but also that many have nothing better than a false idea of the Application. The generality make the explication the whole of a discourse. We find, upon this subject, a surprizing thing in Mr. CLAUDE. He spends near 40 pages of his treatise upon the explication, whilst he bestows only three or four upon the application; though that is the most important part, and requires the greatest exactness.

I therefore intend to give you some rules, that should be observed for your succeeding in the Application; and I shall speak of this part of a discourse—first in general—and then in particular.

S E C T. VII.

Of the APPLICATION in general.

I SHALL first make two general observations.

I. There should be a proper distinction made between an *Application* and an *Epilogue*. These two methods of concluding a discourse should not be confounded, and there is a great difference betwixt them. An *Epilogue* is properly nothing but a recapitulation of what you had said before, and a conclusion wherein you replace before the hearers what they had heard; in Greek Ἀνακεφαλαίωσις; in this manner CICERO finishe his orations. But in Applications you

make some particular reflections on what you have said, that may be proper to affect your hearers, and may inspire them with the sentiments you wish. Applications are usually more copious than epilogues, or simple conclusions. But the grand point is to know, when you ought to use the one, or the other of these methods of concluding a discourse.

When you have explained, and at the same time applied your subjects in the body of your discourse, there is no occasion to make an Application: it is sufficient to conclude with a clear and accurate epilogue. On the other hand, you ought to make Applications, and draw forth uses on two principal occasions.

1st, When the subject you have treated is a *doctrinal* subject; and for this reason, because it is not sufficient merely to instruct, without adding the use and practical tendency of it.

2dly, When you have treated any subject of morality; for then you ought to apply what you have said * to different sorts of persons, according as place, time, and other circumstances may require. You should either comfort—or censure—or combat vices, according to the necessity of your flock.

* “Care must be taken, that the Application be useful and proper; that it make the hearers apprehend some of their sins and defects, and see how to perform their duty; that it awaken them to it, and direct them in it: and therefore the most common sins, such as men’s neglecting their duty to God, in the several branches of it; their setting their hearts inordinately upon the world; their lying in discourse, but chiefly in *bargaining*; their evil speaking, and their hatred and malice, ought to be very often brought in.” BURNET.

II. You ought in the second place to examine, with respect to Applications in general, that common enquiry, "*Whether it be always necessary to make Applications?*" What I have been saying shews that it is not always necessary. An epilogue is sufficient;

1st, When you have made a continual Application in your discourse;

2dly, When you have interwoven the uses in the body of the discourse; excepting these two cases, you should always make an Application.

There is yet another enquiry—" *Whether it be more seasonable to insert the uses in the body of a discourse, or to leave them for the end?*"

In order to resolve this question, it is necessary to distinguish well between *general* reflections and *particular* ones. Particular reflections are those, which arise from some particular circumstances of the subject you are treating; and general reflections are those, which flow from the essence of the subject or matter you are upon. The first you should insert in the body of the discourse, as you are explaining it; but as to general reflections, you should leave them for the end. I do not mean by this—that you may not, when you find it expedient, interweave the uses. You should always preserve a reasonable liberty, and not tie yourselves down to follow perpetually the same method.

These are the remarks I had to offer to you upon the Application in general. I proceed now to give you some particular rules.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the APPLICATION in particular.

IN order to succeed in Applications, there are two things which you ought to understand well.—1st, From whence you should draw your Applications.—2dly, The end you ought to propose in them.

I. On the first of these articles I have two remarks to offer you.

1. The uses ought to arise from the text and the subject you are treating, in such a manner, that your hearers may perceive that the reflections, you make, necessarily flow from the principles you have laid down. For example, in a text of doctrine, after you have established the truth, it is your business in the Application, to draw from it some just consequences, and to shew that the doctrine furnishes motives to piety. You must here be careful not to imitate those, who scrupulously confine themselves to the drawing uses from all parts of a text; that would be a ridiculous exactness. Here may be applied the distinction I have made, that there is but a *moment* between general reflections and particular ones.

2. In

2. In the uses you draw, you must not tie yourselves down so, as to be under a necessity of saying nothing, that does not precisely arise from the subject. You should always preserve a reasonable liberty, especially when you are preaching in your own church. But I would not recommend this to young students in divinity, or to ministers that preach in a strange church. We have in this respects the example of St. CHRYSOSTOM, who in his Applications runs out into several subjects, to which his text does not lead him. You should always have more regard to edification, than to any thing else; and what is good and necessary is always seasonable; and even those uses, that do not seem to flow naturally from the text, may shew the hearers the necessity of the exhortations you address to them.

You should by no means **confine** yourselves always to draw the uses dryly, in the same manner as those preachers do, who have everywhere uses of doctrine, of consolation, of exhortation, &c.

II. The second article regards the end you ought to propose in your Applications. To know from whence you should draw the uses is not sufficient; it is necessary to understand the end you ought to propose in the Application. Now this end is to move and affect your hearers; and to inspire them with those sentiments of piety—of the love of God—of charity, &c. which the subject you are **treating** should naturally produce. But it is proper to examine this

this point a little minutely, on which there are two things which occur for our consideration.

First, What is to be understood by *affecting* an audience. Secondly, The means of doing it.

The first of these enquiries may appear at the first sight useless. But the generality of people have not very just ideas about it, and do not conceive rightly what it is to *affect*; because, perhaps, they have never themselves been affected, as they ought. To *affect* your audience is to inspire them with sentiments of love for God and their neighbour, to lead them effectually to piety and holiness, to reclaim them from sin, and wean them from the love of the world.

But here you must be careful you are not deceived.

1. To *affect* does not consist in exciting vain admiration, or gaining applauses from your hearers. This, however, is the foible of some preachers; provided you admire what they say and praise them, they fancy they have produced much fruit. But they, who entertain these sentiments, do not understand their business, and are animated only by a spirit of pride. Hence what is called *wit*, *vehemence*, &c. is nothing but wind, and when you have gained all imaginable praise, it amounts to nothing.

2. To excite some temporary emotions of grief, and even to draw forth tears, is not to *affect*: tears are not always sure signs that the heart is affected; men sometimes weep through
imitation

imitation—constitution—or some other principles. These emotions, if they are lasting, may indeed produce some happy consequences, but, if they are only momentary, they are of no value. Observe what I have found in ERASMUS on this subject, page 480. *Hos affectus temporarios qui mox refrigescunt, non captat ecclesiastes. Non enim est histrio, aut patronus forensis. Histrioni satis est, si stet actio, & auferat populi plausum. Patrono sufficit, si tantisper commotum habeat judicem, minime sollicito quid animi postea sumat, ponat ve. At pius ecclesiastes illud spectat, ut tenaces aculeos relinquat animis auditorum, & in eos velut in bonam terram bonum semen inspergat, quod paulatim vim suam exerat, donec erumpat in fructum pietatis.*

What then is it to *affect*? It is to speak in such a manner, that your hearers, being deeply impressed with what you have said, may be led to reformation from sin and a change of life, if they were wicked; or else, if they were good, may be confirmed and established still more in the cause of piety. You should not therefore be attached to external marks—to applauses—or even tears; they are almost always dubious, and cannot well be relied upon. When you observe a hearer in silence *, not uttering a word—but sorrowful, dejected, thoughtful, and in this condition returning strait home, and displaying in his conduct the fruits of preaching, you ought to make more account

* “That sermon that makes every one go away silent and grave, and hastening to be alone, to meditate or pray over the matter of it in secret, has had its true effect.” Burnet.

of such a man, than of one that pours forth a torrent of tears, and crowns the preacher with praise and applause.

The second thing that should be considered concerning the end of the Application is—to know *how* you may *affect* your audience: this proves a rock to the generality of preachers; this is the grand art—the principal end of preaching; this is likewise the most arduous and important part of it. I must here read you a passage from Mr. GAUSSEN, who is very bold, and says, in page 214. *Nos igitur hoc nunc quærimus, quid illud tandem sit per quod affectus adhibitâ oratione commoveretur? Quod profectò tantum est, & tam præcellens bonum, ut qui id possit, eum nos ad Deum, quantum quidem homini licet, proxime accedere arbitremur; ut ne quis miretur, si cum tanta sit passim disertorum multitudo, tam rari eloquentes appareant.*

In order to *affect*, you must recollect what has been said upon eloquence, which is, that you must *affect* by the things you speak, and not merely by your manner of speaking them.

Some imagine that it is the beauty of the discourse, others that it is the stile, the gesture, or the elevation of voice that affects. These may have their use, but unless the things themselves correspond with them, they are nothing but air.

LECTURE VII.

S E C T. I.

General RULES for affecting.

IN general, to say things that are *affecting*, your discourse must have these two qualities:

I. It must be clear and solid, so that the hearers may be convinced by it. It is requisite that the consequences you draw should flow naturally from the principles you have laid down, and that the whole be consistent with good sense. For as men are reasonable creatures, they will suffer themselves to be won only by reason.

Here, however, when I say that the application should be solid, I must subjoin this caution, that you must not be too argumentative, nor didactic: that is not proper in the application.

II. Besides justness and solidity, your discourse must have something insinuating and affecting. This is a thing necessary in order to *affect*, and very difficult to express. On this subject

subject CICERO says, *Caput est artis quod tamen tradi arte non potest.* It is a certain *je ne ſçai quoi*, which it is far eaſier to conceive than deſcribe; a certain *unction* which awakens in the heart certain emotions of meakneſs, fear, piety, &c. But it is in this that the difficulty conſiſts. It is therefore of importance, to exert all your efforts to acquire this talent.

There are ſome means, that may be not unprofitably employed for this purpoſe; I will point out to you thoſe which appear the moſt proper.

S E C T. II.

Particular RULES for affecting.

There are nine of them.

I. Rule. **T**HE firſt Rule I would recommend to you for the affecting others, is to be yourſelves affected; and to feel in your own hearts the ſentiments you would tranſuſe into others. Now to attain this ſtate, Mr. GAUSSEN ſays, you muſt follow nature and devotion, which are the two ſources to which you muſt have recourſe. Thoſe who are deſtitute of piety and zeal, however learned they are, will never ſucceed. *Si vis me flere, dolendum eſt primum ipſi tibi.* It is here that commentaries are uſeleſs, and the heart muſt act. It is here we may apply what our Saviour ſays,

says, "*A good man, out of the good treasure of the heart, bringeth forth good things,*" Matt. xii.

35. ERASMUS says the same thing, page 481. *Nil potentius ad excitandos bonos affectus, quam piorum affectuum fontem habere in pectore.* You will never affect others, unless you have piety. It is that which inspires the thoughts, emotions, and words that will not otherwise occur; it is that which animates the voice—the gesture, and in a word, the whole action of the preacher.

Mr. CLAUDE recommends in his *Treatise* several sources of invention, but this is the grand and principle source.

II. Rule. This being supposed, it follows that you must put yourselves into a state of piety. To give you this rule is the more necessary, as we are not always in that disposition. If you ask me the means that should be employed for putting yourselves into that state, observe there are four that may greatly contribute to it.

1. There is prayer. This is at all times useful and necessary, but especially so on this occasion. It gives an elevation, it detaches from the world, affects the heart, and inflames piety. See ERASMUS, page 486. *Sub horam concionis ecclesiastes det se profunde deprecationi, & ab eo postulet sapientiam, linguam, & orationis eventum, qui linguas infantum facit disertas. Incredible dictu quantum lucis, quantum vigoris, quantumque roboris atque alacritatis hinc accedat ecclesiasta,*

ecclesiastæ, imò cunctis hominibus ad quodvis unquam negotium arduum suscipiendum, & peragendum.

2. Meditation. But you must turn it on the side of piety. You must form to yourselves some grand ideas, that strike the understanding and the heart. But you must also consider things in such a manner, as may inspire humility and promote sanctification.

3. You must read the sacred scriptures and books of devotion, especially those passages that are most affecting. There is no one of you but knows, what are the things which affect him the most. Even when they have no relation to what you are engaged in, you should not omit reading them.

4. You must possess your minds with some powerful considerations—such as—the importance of your charge, and the presence of God—you should reflect on the account you must one day give of souls—on death and judgment, &c.

These grand objects a preacher should have incessantly before his eyes. When once you are put into this state of mind, it is incredible with what facility and success your labours will be attended*; you will taste an unspeakable sweetness; it is then you will feel your vocation, will speak on the part of God, and be enabled to affect others.

* “Form yourselves therefore thoroughly, by devout meditations and fervent prayer, to seriousness of heart, and zeal for the eternal welfare of souls: for then every thing else that you are to do, will follow of course.” SECKER’S *Charges*, p. 289.

III. Rule. In order to affect you must know the human heart. This knowledge is absolutely necessary—it is the grand end you ought to aim at, and should labour to attain. It may be derived from two sources, one from within yourselves—the other from without.

The first source is the knowledge of yourselves and your own hearts. You must speak agreeably to what you have experienced in yourselves. For this purpose you should examine your own hearts, and observe what affects and moves you. When you have well studied the knowledge of yourselves, you will easily perceive how others are disposed, for all men are formed nearly in the same manner; and therefore what affects you, will likewise affect them. Has a man piety? He observes what was the cause of it. Has he been reclaimed from any fault?—He examines by what means he became so. Is he not yet entirely reformed, but subject to relapses?—He will observe what seduces him, and occasions his relapses. If you proceed in this manner, you will be enabled to give good advice, and will attain to that very difficult art—the art of speaking in such a manner, that you may seem to be reading *in* the hearts of your hearers.

The second source, from whence you may draw the knowledge of the human heart, is the study of men and the world,—the making continual reflections on the different occurrences of life—and remarking the maxims that

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worldly men advance—and what evasions they make use of to excuse themselves from the practice of virtue. You should study the different characters of the rich—the poor—persons of each sex—and, in a word, of all those in whom you have remarked any particular fault. Above all, you should make it your particular study to know the character of your parishioners—and endeavour to discover what are the faults, sins, and disorders that are most prevalent among them. This is a study worth more than all the books in the world. *Vitæ humanæ contemplatio tanti est, & tam latè patentis usus, ut eum plus profecturum putem, qui vitam humanam non in transcurso, ut vulgus solet, sed philosophicè contemplatur, quàm qui omnes, quotquot centum abhinc annis de ratione concionandi in lucem prodierint, libros diligentissimè versaverit. Est enim concio pharetræ similis, ex quâ promuntur spicula quæ milites, mercatores, viros, juvenes, avaros, prodigos, &c. salutaritè saucient. Quare qui eorum hominum mores, ingenium, indolem, & instituta ignorabit; porro qui ethices imperitus ad concionem accedet, unumquemque effingere, & per suos εἰκονισμῶς describere non poterit, qui tamen ecclesiastæ summus conatus est.* GAUSSEN, page 243.

But in order to acquire this knowledge of his parishioners, it is necessary that a pastor should converse with them *. This intercourse

* There are some very striking and valuable remarks on the great importance and neglect of this duty amongst us, in archbishop SECKER's *Charges*, p. 268—270.

would

would be very useful, provided it does not degenerate into too great familiarity ; *that* would excite contempt in the people.

IV. Rule. A minister should have his mind perpetually intent upon his office, and to that he should refer all he reads, all he hears, and even all he observes in company. When he is thus habituated to meditate continually on the duties of the ministry, and the means of procuring the salvation of souls, he will consider things in a thousand different ways, and render his imagination copious and fertile. If, for example, he wishes to remedy some disorder, several different methods will occur to him ; and from that meditation he will reap much greater fruit and advantage, than he could hope to receive from reading many books. Hence he will acquire a certain turn and manner, that will make what he says appear original. But as the reflections he may at any time make upon his own heart and the conduct of others, will be apt to vanish and be forgotten, he should take the trouble of putting them down in writing, and make a collection of them. Such a collection will be of more worth than all the books in the world, and you will find from it thoughts, that would not otherwise occur to you. But you will never take this trouble, unless you have the piety requisite to overcome the disgust we naturally have for thinking upon things that afford us no pleasure, but are rather irksome to us.

V. Rule. It is not sufficient merely to exhort sinners to a reformation of life, you must likewise, in order to affect them, put yourselves in their place, consider what they may object, and answer it. Every sinner has his method of flattering himself, and has also his objections and evasions. Let us take, for example, an avaricious man. He will tell you, *That God has given the gifts of this world to mankind, and therefore they are not to be despised; that he ought to provide for the necessities of life, and lay up something against the wants of old age, and for his children.* To these general objections and pretences, he will add others adapted to his state. If he is one of those avaricious men, that heap up riches for the sake of furnishing themselves with pleasures, he will tell you, *That he is not one of those misers who scrape together only to heap up treasure upon treasure, and make no use of their riches.* Take an avaricious man of this kind, he will tell you, *That he is none of those who do wrong to others—that he employs none but lawful means, &c.* It is the same with all other sinners: if they do not discover themselves in what you say, you will never gain them. I justify this assertion by adding, that you must have regard to the different dispositions of sinners. Some of them are hardened—others are not so—some are beginning to reform, &c. Be careful to distribute what you have to say in such a manner, that every sinner may take his share,

share, and may perceive that you are speaking to him.

You will observe from hence, that you must never propose promises and consolations, as if they belonged to every man; nor pronounce censures, as if all sinners were desperately hardened.

VI. Rule. Observe here a sixth Rule, which is nearly the same with the preceding. There is however some difference. You must then take care that your hearers do not make an ill use of what you say to them, which may happen many ways. If, for instance, you are preaching upon the mercy of God, and the merits of Jesus Christ, some sinners will *infallibly* pervert this doctrine. For this reason you should always add some caution, to prevent the false consequences that sinners would draw from it. To this point you must be particularly attentive on these two occasions; first, when you are speaking of vices; secondly, when you are treating of some virtue.

1. With respect to vices, it very often happens, that whilst you are combating one vice, you harden sinners that are fond of its opposite. I will elucidate this point by an example.

If you are declaiming against *avarice*, a prodigal will join with you, and outdo the utmost you can say upon this subject—but he will flatter himself, that you have nothing to say to his disadvantage. If you are preaching against the *profane* and *impious*—the hypocrites,

crites, who have only the outside of piety, will applaud themselves upon it; as, on the other hand, if you preach against *hypocrites*, the profane will embrace your sentiment. *He is right*, they will say; *those devourers of sermons and prayers are worse than we*; and thus they will establish themselves in their disorders. Just so when you are preaching upon those passages in the Psalms of David, where he curses his enemies, *revengeful* people will not fail to flatter themselves, and imagine that their behaviour has no evil in it. And thus you see how sinners will pervert almost every thing. You must therefore prevent these abuses.

2. It is nearly the same with respect to virtues. Men often take that for a virtue, which has only the appearance of it; either the action itself has nothing good, or it is performed from some false motives. It is proper therefore to explain this whole matter thoroughly.

For example, if you were making an elogium upon *charity*, many would imagine that it consists in sometimes doing alms, and would flatter themselves that they were in the high road to heaven, under the pretence that they have sometimes given alms, though perhaps they did it through ostentation or necessity, &c. Speak upon *reconciliation*, and many will fancy that it consists merely in shaking hands, without being at any trouble to correct the emotions which agitate their heart. If you are exhorting sinners to *repentance*, many will flatter themselves and think it sufficient to acknowledge themselves sinners, and to conceive some
remorse

remorse at the view of their sins: on this account they will deem themselves true penitents, though they are perpetually returning to their former courses: you must therefore have your eyes constantly open, and take care that when you censure any vice, or commend any virtue, you always add a caution to prevent sinners from abusing what you say.

VII. The seventh rule is less known, but not less important, than the others; and it is this—that in order to affect, you must distinguish the various emotions you wish to excite: you must distinguish the great emotions, from the more mild and placid ones. When you would excite any great emotions—such as drawing tears from your audience, and striking them with great admiration, you must not dwell long upon them; *commotis animis diutius in conquestione commorari non oportebit*. When you have produced the effect you aimed at, you should conclude, or pass on to something else. Hence it appears that they are deceived, who are always wishing to be pathetic. *Qui semper movet, nunquam movet*. You ought to be very cautious in this point, for young students in divinity are apt to indulge this fault—the desire of always raising some great emotions.

With respect to the more placid emotions, you may dwell longer upon them. For example, would you excite your audience to the love of God, or a sinner to repentance?—A period or two will not be sufficient, you must be more extensive. But here it is proper to

remark, that great emotions are not always the most sincere and durable. *Nullum violentum durabile.* I will illustrate this to you by a principle of morality, which is a very true one; and it is this—that the *slow* passions are the most dangerous. Take a man who breaks out at once, as soon as he has spent his fire, he recovers himself. It is not so with people of a *close* temper; they nourish their passion a long time, till they find an opportunity of gratifying it. Why do you think the scripture condemns *avarice* so severely?—Because it is one of those *slow passions*, that dwell much longer in the heart than others, and consequently are more dangerous. It would be easy to apply this reflection to our present subject. It is certain, that the mild and placid emotions have more effect; they are lasting, and produce conversion with much greater certainty.

VIII. Rule. In order to *affect* you must know how to restrain yourselves, and not say more than you ought: some preachers, when once they are in a train of speaking upon any vice or virtue, or of exhortation or censure, never give over till they have exhausted their subject. This method is very bad. A judicious preacher knows when to speak, and when to be silent—he knows to say what he ought—and to stop where he ought. You should therefore be careful to avoid these two rocks.

The 1st, is exaggerating things. You must never do it either in censures, or exhortations, or commendations, &c. For when you indulge
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this fault, you will gain no more credit from your audience ; and although, upon other occasions you should advance the most reasonable things, your hearers will not believe you.

The second rock is—the saying every thing that can be said with truth. It is a great art to know how to be silent in season. When, for example, you are to censure any disorder that has made a noise and rumour, it is sometimes proper after you have begun upon it, and your audience understand what you aim at, to stop quite short, by saying—*You all know very well what I mean* ;—such a term as this is proper, and would produce great effects, but it must be used in season. To mention particulars is a delicate point, and there are some things that are better suppressed than spoken. Here a maxim occurs, which ought to be well observed, and confirms what I am saying ; it is this—that you must leave it to your hearers to make some reflections. When you have put them in a way of thinking, the reflections they make of themselves produce much greater fruit, than those you would make.—It may even happen, they will conclude from the silence of the preacher, that they are worse and more corrupt than he thinks them. Besides an audience is much pleased, when they find you treat them well.

IX. Rule. You must not always address yourselves directly to you hearers by way of censure and exhortation. You sometimes observe them attentive, it is then proper to change
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change your method, and propose some question—some case of conscience, or else to relate some history ; this will produce a greater effect, than if you were to continue in the same method. I shall not dwell on this reflection, because I have already touched upon it. These are the means that should be employed in order to affect your hearers.

Now as applications usually turn either upon exhortation, or censure, or consolation, I shall proceed further to speak to you on each of these points in particular.

S E C T. III.

On the PARTS of the APPLICATION,

A N D

1st, Of EXHORTATION.

I PRESUME you are well aware, that in the Application the principal design is to exhort some to a reformation of life, and others to a perseverance in piety. Now to exhort in a proper manner you must do it.

I. With authority and gravity, and not in a trembling way, like a person that is afraid of being reprimanded. When you consider that you are speaking on the part of God, you should assume a manner becoming the excellence and dignity of the gospel. But take
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care also, that you do not put on a certain imperious, haughty air, that may seem to flow from vanity. For if timidity does harm on the one hand, haughtiness on the other discourages and provokes the hearer.

II. You must exhort with long-suffering. This is the advice St. Paul gives us, 2 Tim. iv. 2. *Exhort with all long suffering.* As Exhortation principally tends to undeceive those who are in some error, or to reclaim sinners from some vice, you must exercise long-suffering in both these respects.

III. You must exhort with doctrine. This St. Paul requires in the verse I have just cited. *Exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.* For this purpose it is necessary to speak in such a manner, as may be proper to persuade and convince your hearers of the truth of what you advance.

Here it may be asked, *Whether it is right to communicate to the people the reasons, on which you found your Exhortation.* To this I answer, that you may sometimes do it and sometimes omit it. When in the body of the discourse you have laid down some good principles, and proved a truth, or the necessity of a duty, it is but useless to repeat them in the Application. But when you have not had the opportunity of doing it, you may mention them in the Application.

In order to exhort well, it is a principal point to understand thoroughly what motives you should propose as the foundation of your Exhortations.

Exhortations. Some of them are drawn from the justice of what you require; others from the mercy of God; others from fear, hope, our vocation, a future life, &c. You should always build your Exhortations upon some of those grand motives which religion affords us. It is thus St. Paul uses them, Rom. xii. 1. —2 Cor. v.—Eph. iv.—But the means of making their force felt, is to be thoroughly persuaded of them yourselves.

S E C T. IV.

Of CONSOLATION.

WHAT I have to offer you on this subject, amounts to these two things:

I. You must administer Consolation in a tender affectionate manner, so that your hearers may think you pity them for their afflictions. Nothing affects them so much, as finding that you sympathize in their misfortunes. But for this purpose you must really be affected. For compassion is one of those things, which it is very difficult to counterfeit. You ought therefore to have a true love for men, and to be concerned at every thing that befalls them.

II. You must comfort with prudence and discretion. Consolations when ill-administered, are very pernicious; they harden those to whom you address them. In order to comfort properly you should distinguish the state of
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the person you are speaking to : some are afflicted with diseases—others by the death of relations, &c. You should speak to these people in a different manner. You should lead sinners to the point where they ought to be, which is true repentance. When you have brought them to that point, you should shew them the uses they ought to make of their afflictions. See upon this subject, the *Treatise on the Causes of Corruption*, Part II. Cause the last, Art. iv. 3.

S E C T. V.

Of C E N S U R E.

CENSURE is one of the most difficult and delicate things belonging to our profession. There are many faults to be avoided in it. For this purpose, it is necessary to pay attention to these three things. First, You must examine what are the things you should censure. Secondly, Who are the persons you should censure ; and lastly, In what manner you should censure ;

I. The first rule regards the subjects proper for Censure. Here a minister should always have two things before his eyes.

In the first place, he should examine the certainty of a fact. He should be well assured of the thing itself, and its principal circumstances. He should never censure upon mere rumour and vague reports. He should avoid being credulous and suspicious. Nothing does a minister

ter more harm than taking fire unseasonably. But as all certain facts are not deserving Censure,

He ought, in the second place, to consider well the nature of the thing he is concerned with.

1. There are many things too inconsiderable, arrant trifles, that are not worth being censured from the pulpit and being made an article in a sermon.

2. There are some private sins, which very few persons are acquainted with. These ought to be censured in private; or if you would do it in public, you should do it with such circumspection, as not to let people understand what person you mean.

3. You should never bring into the pulpit things of a private and personal nature; that would be attended with very disagreeable consequences. I mean not, however, that this is utterly impracticable—but it should not be done except in extraordinary cases; otherwise, a minister would be justly accused of acting with passion or imprudence.

II. Rule. You must consider well what person you ought to censure.

1. You should never speak in too particular a manner. You should never point out from the pulpit this or that person in particular, unless it be for enormous and notorious sins—and when private Censures have had no effect.

2. You must censure sinners differently, according as their faults are greater or less, and according

according to their respective degrees of corruption and obduracy : if you were to censure those who are yet possessed of some good qualities, as you would do abandoned people, you would produce no good.

3. You should never be too ready to censure magistrates and public persons ; lest by discovering their faults and irregularities you should give the people occasion for contempt and disobedience to their authority. Those Censures might also make the people think, that you are wanting in respect for the magistrate, and are actuated by vanity. I mean not, however, that when you do speak to them, you may not do it with courage ; but you should begin with simple exhortation. You should first use private admonitions. If they prove ineffectual, and magistrates are guilty of any gross irregularities, you may then speak of them in public.

4. You should not censure all the world indifferently. You must not exaggerate in your Censures, and speak, as if all mankind were abandoned and desperate, and there were no piety left in the world : such outrageous reproaches produce a very bad effect. See GAUSSEN, page 185. *Dummodo concionatores de summâ rei vera dicant, de cætero in iis quibus veritas ornatur vel illustratur, veris addere parum iis religio est. Undè porrò fit, ut qui dicant non quâ de re dicant attendentes, nullum exaggerandi vel deprimendi modum faciant ; sic si quando perversis & in pejus mentes auditorum mores deplorent, nihil sibi*

sibi ad summam nequitiam describendam reliqui faciunt, & magno verborum strepitu ea aliquando deblaterant, ex quibus si quis mores auditorum æstimet paratus sit dijerare eos esse Thyeste, Busiride, & toto illo nefariorum hominum choragio nequiores.

III. In the third and last rule, you are to consider in what manner you ought to censure. There are three maxims to be observed on this subject :

1. You must censure with zeal and pious freedom. You must not be afraid of displeasing sinners, nor have regard to the appearance of persons, but do your duty as in the presence of God. When, however, I say this, I suppose that you are not ill-natured or violent. That is sometimes called zeal, which is nothing but the effect of a secret passion. If you wish not to deceive yourselves in this point, there is a sure mark by which you may easily discover whether your zeal be sincere ; and it is this—to examine whether you have the courage to say to sinners in private, what you say to them in public.

2. You must censure with discretion, and not fall into a preposterous passion about a trifle. Every thing should be censured according to its nature and importance, otherwise you will produce no good effect.

3. You must censure with charity, as St. PAUL enjoins us. You should regulate your Censures and reproaches, so that your hearers may perceive, that if you censure them, you do it from a principle of love and charity towards

towards them. For this purpose, you ought to abound in sincere love for your neighbours. That love will on one hand make you speak without partiality, and without flattery—and on the other, it will give you a certain air of mildness, that will please and affect the heart. Once more: you should avoid speaking too harsh Censures, and sometimes spare the sinner.

Besides the reasons I have alledged, there is one more which is taken from the interest of pastors, and it is this—that such Censures render them odious to the people, and often bring them into trouble. These then are the precautions that should be used, when you undertake to censure sinners.

Lastly, to finish what I have to say upon applications, I have only two more precepts to offer you.

The first is—that you should know how to conclude a discourse seasonably: in order to this,

1. You must not always conclude in the same manner; as those preachers do, who at the end of their sermon always conduct their hearers to heaven.

2. You should finish in such a manner as to leave your audience affected. For when once you have succeeded in affecting them, and notwithstanding that you continue going on, you destroy the whole effect you have produced.

3. When you have a striking passage in the application, you should reserve it for the end,

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and manage it well. For the sake of greater clearness, observe there are two sorts of emotions that should be distinguished.

There are some emotions which do not arise from the general design of the discourse, and are produced by some particular passages of it.

There are others which flow from the design of the text, to which the sermon is devoted. With the last of these you should endeavour to conclude. As soon as you shall think you have stirred them up, either conclude, or endeavour to keep your hearers in *agitation*. For example, do you think you have awakened in a sinner the desire of conversion, cherish that desire, and tell him, for instance, *You will find several obstacles to the success of this sermon, &c.* or else point out to him some means of working out his salvation.

The second precept relates to what you ought to do after you have preached. To observe every thing I have hitherto said to you is not sufficient. If, after that, you imagine all is done, you are mistaken; for besides what has been said to you upon this subject, you must examine what fruit your sermons produce, and whether the people are reformed. You must examine whether they relish your preaching; whether drunkenness, swearing, debauchery, or other vices against which you have preached, are decreased. The husbandman does not sow his seed in the field

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to leave it there unnoticed, but he goes from time to time to see whether it is likely to yield him a plentiful harvest. This a minister should likewise do. If, in this examination, you should find your sermons have produced some fruit, you should rejoice and be encouraged by it; you should endeavour to discover by what means you produced that happy effect, that you may employ the same means for the future. You should also express to your people the joy you feel from the change you observe, and encourage them. Praises judiciously bestowed have a very good effect: and if you censure your hearers when they fail in their duty, it is right you should express your satisfaction to them when they perform it. If, on the other hand, you find that your ministry has produced little or no fruit, you should endeavour to discover the cause of it; whether it be owing to yourselves, or your hearers. If to yourselves, you should correct yourselves; if the evil comes from your hearers, you should endeavour to discover what might render your labours unprofitable, and search out some new means to win them, and to remove if possible, the sources of their corruption.

I do not, however, mean by this—that on account of your not observing any immediate fruit from your sermons, you are to conclude that they will continue without effect: reformation is wrought by degrees. Besides that,

fruit sometimes lies hid. You should remember what Jesus Christ teaches us in the parable, *That the seed grew while the husbandman slept.* God sometimes performs his work without our perceiving it.

These are the remarks I had to offer you upon sermons; I shall speak to you in my next Lecture on the subject of Catechisms.

LECTURE VIII.

S E C T. I.

Of CATECHISMS.

IT seems that I might dispense with speaking upon Catechisms in particular, since the generality of the rules which I have already given for sermons, are applicable also to Catechisms. Nevertheless, I have thought proper to treat of them in particular. First, these exercises are of very great importance*, as they

* From the first beginning of our reformation from popery down to the present times, many persons of the highest station and abilities have most strongly inculcated and promoted the exercise of Catechising in our churches, as highly important to the cause of true religion. Archbishop *Wake* (in the preface to his Commentary on the Church Catechism, p. ix.) has extolled catechetical instructions in much the same terms with our author, "as far more important and useful than *sermons*."—But for this he has been full hastily and severely censured by Dr. EDWARDS, in his *Preacher*, vol. I. p. 9.

We are indebted to several learned and pious prelates (as well as other divines) of our church, for most excellent catechetical expositions, commentaries, discourses, and lectures, particularly to the late Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Secker; on whose zeal and abilities in this sacred employment it would be needless and impertinent for me to expatiate, after his elegant panegyrist,

they are adapted to convey the knowledge of religion, and they have several other uses which I shall not at present mention. What I have to say to you on this subject is—that when you shall commence ministers, you must labour chiefly to form a new generation. There are only two kinds of persons who can do this—parents and pastors. But parents are often vicious, negligent, or intent upon something else than the education of their children; and therefore they give themselves no trouble to make them religious and good. This care then belongs to ministers; but of all the means they can employ for this end, Catechisms are one of the most useful. It is necessary to instruct people young; for when they arrive at a certain age, there is no more opportunity for it; when they are come to 22 or 23 years of age, they will learn nothing more on the subject of religion: hence you see that they are mistaken who treat Catechisms with contempt. They are far more important and useful than sermons, and it were to be wished that they were generally substituted in their place. This is true *divinity*. There were formerly no professors, as there are now. The Catechists were considered as doctors in religion. By Catechisms you may understand either sermons, or books that explain the principal points of religion. You will observe, that it is the former of these

gyrist, Dr. BURTON, and his judicious one Dr. BENTHAM. See Dr. *Burton's* Latin Epistle on the Death of Dr. Secker, p. 11, 12, and Dr. Bentham's *Reflections on the Study of Divinity*, p. xx.

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I mean to speak upon. It will not, however, be unuseful to say a word or two about the books, which have appeared under the name of Catechisms.

In general, we have but few good ones, and almost all of them are defective, either in matter or method.

I. With respect to matter, I find three faults in our Catechisms; and I may venture to say, none of them are perfect.

1. Some essential things they omit, as history; morality they treat very superficially; and they give no proofs of the existence of God, of the truth and divinity of the Christian religion, and the sacred Scriptures.

2. There are many things in them which should be retrenched—as scholastic matters and controversies, which relate not to the fundamental points of faith.

3. Many things in them might be changed for the better—either in the order of the subjects, or in the manner of explaining them*.

II. All the Catechisms contain some good things, but in several of them the method is obscure and injudicious. Sometimes they even affirm things that are neither just nor true. See, for instance, the *Catechism of Heydelberg*. What it says upon the 1st article of the *Creed* does not express the true sense of that article. It is the same in the 4th *Commandment*, which

* Our author has made several similar and important remarks on Catechisms, in his celebrated work “The Causes of the present Corruption of Christians,” Part II. Cause VII.

relates entirely to the Sabbath, and not in the least to the sacred ministry and schools. Besides this, the authors of Catechisms express all these matters in *scholastic*, and obscure terms; as it would be easy to shew, from a variety of examples.

Before we come to Catechisms that are delivered *vivâ voce*, I must observe to you that there are, or at least there ought to be, two sorts of them.

1. It were to be wished that there were some very simple ones for young beginners.

2. It would be proper to have some more extensive ones, for those of a more advanced age*. The first are the most necessary, because the latter may be supplied by sermons; but there is nothing that can supply the place of familiar Catechisms. Now in these there must be

* On this latter plan there are many excellent catechetical tracts—but scarcely any, that I know of, on the former. For children “the Church-Catechism broke into short Questions,” affords an useful method of examination: for persons of a more advanced age Lewis’s exposition of it may be used to great advantage, as it is, on the whole, more plain and easy than most tracts of this kind; which are, in general, not so well adapted, as might be wished, for the instruction of young persons, especially those of an illiterate education. Amongst the great variety of books on a still more extensive plan than Lewis’s I cannot but recommend our *Author’s* Catechism,—the excellent Bishop *Wilson’s* book intitled “An Instruction for the Indians,” and also Archbishop *Wake’s* Commentaries on our Church Catechism, though he dwells (more perhaps than is necessary,) on several points in dispute between us and the papists. I will venture to add, that not only *catechumens*, but many young clergymen and candidates for orders, may be highly profited from an attentive perusal of these three tracts. All of them may be had for a small sum by any member of the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.

great

great clearness and simplicity, and, above all, great brevity. There should be the same difference between these two sorts of Catechisms, as between those made for children of a more advanced age, and lectures in divinity: when therefore God shall call you to serve in his church, you must labour to establish these kinds of familiar Catechisms. If that cannot be done, study to supply them by the instructions you give to catechumens, and by the Catechisms you make upon the Sunday. To come now to Catechisms,—I must lay before you three things upon this head—1. The subjects that should be treated.—2. The manner of treating them.—3. The design and use of Catechisms.

S E C T. II.

Of the Subjects proper for CATECHISMS.

I MUST, first of all, forewarn you that you will not be well able to instruct youth, unless they have some knowledge of the sacred history: with this you must begin. As a proof of this, we find it was the will of God to instruct us by historical facts; and we know from experience, that children comprehend histories better than precepts and doctrines. It would therefore be a good thing to have a small abridgment of it; and, indeed, without that they cannot have a just idea of religion; since the sermons, and the instructions you deliver, suppose the knowledge of history. If
2 they

they do not know, in general, when MOSES, DAVID, and JESUS CHRIST lived, and the circumstances of their lives—it is not possible they should well understand what you say about them. You should, therefore, first begin with speaking upon religion in an historical manner. You may see more at large what I say on this point in the *Treatise on the Causes of Corruption*. Part II. Cause V, and VII.

I come now to the subjects that ought to be treated in Catechisms. I shall first remark here, what I have said with regard to sermons—which is, that all sorts of subjects are not proper to be proposed. It is of consequence to choose them well, and this is still more necessary in Catechisms than in sermons. In Catechisms you should say nothing but what every body will comprehend. Whereas in sermons you have rather more liberty. They should therefore be formed upon the principal points of religion. This is what St. PAUL, (Heb. v.) calls *milk*, in opposition to *strong meat*.

If you wish to know what you are to understand by these principal subjects—you may judge of them by what Catechumens were taught to say, in the ancient church*. They declared that they believed in God, and JESUS CHRIST, after that, they renounced the devil and his works—the world and its pomps---the flesh and its lusts. You should therefore banish from Catechisms the subjects, which are not very

* A fuller account of the substance of the ancient Catechisms may be seen in Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book X. Chap. I. § 6.
necessary;

necessary, and you should not propose to children things of too abstract a nature.

If you consider well what I have been saying, you will perceive that there are two faults to be avoided.

The 1st is, those questions which are of no use to children, such are the theological disputes, and those too which have some uses, but are of none with respect to the persons you are speaking to.

The 2d fault you should avoid is---the treating subjects in too deep a manner, and straying from that simplicity which Catechisms require.

But to come to a particular account of these subjects---they are of two sorts. Some of them relate to faith---and others to the duties of religion.

I. Among the subjects of faith, you should choose those which serve as the foundation of religion. For this we have two rules.

The 1st is, the Apostle's Creed, which contains all necessary points--and which, except about two expressions, is taken entirely from scripture.

The 2d rule is contained in what St. PAUL delivers at the end of the vth, and the beginning of the vith chapter to the HEBREWS; where, after having told the Hebrews that they had need of milk,---he shews what the Catechumens ought to be instructed in.

I think St. Paul has comprized, in that passage, what ought to be taught in Catechisms.

It

It is of consequence to establish children well in the belief of the fundamentals of Christianity. This may at first appear difficult; it may, however, be effected by using clear proofs, and simple reasoning. For example, you may first make them sensible that the world is made in *such* a manner, that it is necessary some one should conduct and govern it. 2. As religion is founded on facts, it is easy to convince them. You may, for instance, easily prevail with them to acknowledge the *resurrection of Jesus Christ*, by shewing them that it is a truth founded upon facts--upon the most unquestionable testimonies---that our Saviour appeared to 500 persons. 3. You should chiefly employ proofs *from sense*. Children apprehend them better than those who are advanced in age, because they are yet in *puris naturalibus*, and they are not distracted with occupations, by which men are engrossed in the world.

II. I come to the duties of religion. On this head you may enter into a more circumstantial account. You should, however, be careful not to discourage children by too tedious and irksome a detail. The principal duties you ought to inculcate are these, to adore God---to pay Him due homage---to love Him; ---you should make them sensible how they should raise up their hearts to God--teach them to pray with attention---to have humility---meekness and charity towards their neighbours---and then lead them to a detachment from the world.

If

If once you can inspire them with this detachment, they will themselves perceive that they must be sober,---chaste, &c. General duties are a key to all the rest.

You should, however, enter into some particular account: you may explain to them the *decalogue*, but should do it according to the maxims of the gospel * and the extent of its precepts. For this end you should make them learn the principal passages of holy scripture. Thus much for the subject of Catechisms. I draw from the whole this conclusion—that as every body is not fit to instruct children, there should be subjects fixed and prescribed—and we should also have some books to be explained to youth †, that children and private persons may be able to prepare themselves upon them. Besides, that would prevent ministers from running into useless things; and, far from being tiresome, the people would have more idea of religion; because things gain admittance into duller minds, only by inculcating the same subjects—and by an uniform method of instruction.

But you will say—*Ought ministers to study only these subjects, would not that lead them into*

* On this occasion a young divine would do well to recommend to the particular attention of his catechumens that part of our Saviour's sermon on the mount, which explains and inculcates the moral precepts of the law, in a more strict and spiritual manner, than the Jewish doctors were used to interpret them. Matt. v. 21—48.

† In this view our Church-Catechism has been wisely prescribed and justly esteemed, as an excellent ground-work for our most zealous and able catechists to enlarge upon.

remissness. Far from becoming remiss they would even learn their religion the better for it. He, who is capable of teaching religion well to youth, understands it as well as the ablest divines. This obliges me to tell you, that you will not be able to do any thing more useful, or which more facilitates the exercise of the ministry, than being diligent in your Catechisms*. Those are the best studies which you turn to the purpose of instructing youth. You will draw this advantage from them, that your minds being attached only to solid things, you will consult nothing but piety and good sense, and you will relish nothing that is useless.

* These sentiments of our author, may perhaps derive some force and confirmation from the following reflections of Dr. BURTON.

“ Qui reipublicæ, & religionis Christianæ incremento bene cupio, idem cupio ut Catechetica hæc disciplina neque gratiâ neque honore careat, sed frequentior usque atque acceptior in ecclesiâ celebretur : utque adeo sacerdos quilibet parœcialis non satis habeat in rostris triumphare concionator celeberrimus ; sed gaudeat potius hoc Catechistæ officio suo, studiosus sacræ paginæ interpres, siue dogmata proponens, explicansque, siue pietatis præcepta animis insinuans, vel inculcans, eâdem operâ lac infantibus, simul et adultis cibos firmiores, administrans. Hæc vera erit theologi Christiani laus, populari omni plausu longè præstantior.” Epist. p. 12.

S E C T. III.

Of the proper Manner of treating SUBJECTS.

IT may be affirmed, that the success of instructions depends as much on the manner of treating things, as on the matter itself. In reality, the matter is usually good, but the manner is not always so. In order to instruct well you should study these five things. 1. Clearness. 2. Simplicity. 3. Brevity. 4. Order, and 5. An agreeable manner of instructing.

1. Rule. You should instruct in a clear manner. To make this reflection would be needless, as we have already spoken of it—if it were not still more necessary in catechisms; because children do not understand the generality of terms, and you must use the simplest methods of speaking to instruct them. If you wish to know in what this clearness consists, I must refer you to what I have already said upon it. I shall, however, give you some further rules.

1. One means of being clear is to keep yourselves to things that are essential, and absolutely necessary. Things are more, or less clear in proportion as they are necessary. Take, for example, the subject of the *last judgment*, you will easily make a child comprehend it. Take, next, the subject of *transubstantiation*

substantiation, or that of *predestination*, and you will have a great deal more trouble to make him understand it. Thus what is absolutely necessary is usually clear. What is simply useful is more clear than what is unnecessary. Whatever you shall find obscure in religion, consider that as unnecessary.

2. In order to be clear you should use the means I have proposed for sermons—namely—relate histories—make use of comparisons—turn things in different ways—repeat them, &c.

3. You must be clear in your style—banish not only scholastic and scientific terms—but likewise such obscure methods of speaking, as are not understood by illiterate people, but only by persons of genius and reading. You must let yourselves down, and say nothing that is above the capacity of children. In private instructions you should sometimes speak the country dialect, which they are used to.

II. Rule. You must be simple. I have already spoken of simplicity—and I mean by it, that you must not pique yourselves upon being fond of saying every thing---and of treating things too scrupulously to the bottom. For this would have a bad effect. Moreover, in order to be simple you must never use abstract proofs and subtle reasonings. The generality of ministers spoil themselves by reading philosophical books, that are otherwise good *. Thus
many

* I cannot but wish these judicious reflections of our author may put many of our young *academics* on their guard, against the
incon-

many have acquired a metaphysical stile and method of reasoning by reading P. MALEBRANCHE'S *Search after Truth*. If, therefore, you are treating on the *Resurrection*, you should not run into the objections that are raised about the dissolution of bodies, but should confine yourselves to the proofs which the gospel furnishes.

III. Rule. Brevity should prevail.

1. In your discourses—I mean, in your explanations. This is still more necessary in catechisms than in sermons. *Qui breviter dicunt, docere possunt*. When you load your catechisms too much you will produce no good, for children are incapable of long attention.

2. You should display this in every article. You should reduce your matter to a few heads, and on every head avoid prolix reasonings. If you think you are not understood, you should somewhat change your manner of reasoning: avoid also a great number of subdivisions.

IV. Rule. Order must be observed on every subject.

inconveniencies they are likely to fall into from their great attachment and familiarity with the writings of LOCKE, CLARKE, BUTLER, and some other celebrated authors of the metaphysical class. It would be well if every young divine, who, on quitting the University, engages in the care of a country parish, would duly consult the *edification* of the younger and more illiterate part of his people, by condescending to adopt a mode of reasoning and expression, very different from that which is full often used, for the *entertainment* of an academic audience: unless he does this, he will never fulfil the duty of a good Christian pastor, who should however be mindful of those short, but expressive commands of our blessed Lord to St. Peter, *Feed my lambs—Feed my sheep*.

M

I. You

1. You should begin with the simplest things---and from them proceed to such as are more difficult: for, in these subjects, there is always something that is not entirely clear.

2. Order requires you to distinguish your heads and reasonings, and, after you have distinguished them, you should repeat them, that your hearers may recollect and understand the order that has prevailed in your catechisms, provided they should wish to meditate upon what you have been treating.

The best order you can follow, is not that which men have invented, but that which God has pointed out by his own conduct. Before the law, he first revealed himself to mankind as God the Creator and Rewarder. After that, we observe the fall of Adam---the consequences of that fall---the idolatry and wickedness that prevailed. Next, the choice that God makes of a people---the laws that he gives them---the promises of sending the Messiah. Lastly, the coming of the Saviour, and thence a more clear manifestation, by his means, of the particular doctrines of religion. Observe, how by following the order of time you may instruct youth. It would be transgressing against good sense to begin first with speaking to children on the controversies in religion, on the Lord's supper, &c. You should first inform them what religion is.

V. Rule. You should instruct in an agreeable manner. This is very important. Though
4 you

you should say the most clear and solid things, yet if you do not say them in such a manner as affects children, you will never do any good.

Young people are sensible to pleasure; what appears to them disagreeable discourages them; and from hence arises the little love that men have for religion. There are two methods of being agreeable to them. First, by the things that are taught them; next, by the persons who teach them.

1. You should make them sensible of the excellence, the justice, and the necessity of what you teach them,---the usefulness arising from it---the misery they would fall into without it,---how great has been the goodness of God in giving us his Son---the miserable condition in which we were,---the wretchedness of those who have been ignorant or negligent of these things. Hence you see it is not sufficient to say things in a flat dry manner.

2. The person may greatly contribute to make instructions received with pleasure. For, when we are prejudiced in favour of the persons that speak to us, we profit the more from him. It is therefore expedient, in preserving your authority, to make yourselves beloved by children---to accommodate yourselves to their weakness and age---to have a cordiality and tenderness for them---to commend them when they do well---and not dishearten them when they do ill: you cannot imagine how it affects young people, when they find persons, whom they respect---condescending to them.

What I have been saying may be applied to both the kinds of Catechisms, which I have touched upon.

I should, however, think myself faulty, if I were not to speak to you on what you ought to do in private. It is then, that you should principally practise the five rules I have given you. You may instruct children better in private, than in public; you may put a thousand different questions to them, and follow where they lead you without constraint. But you should apply this maxim above all, when you are concerned with *catechumens*.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Manner of interrogating Children.

WE find many people that explain a subject well, but do not succeed when they are to put questions to children. I have therefore judged it requisite to give you some rules on this subject; and what I think you should observe are these,

I. Rule. You should never ask children any thing but what they know, and can answer. If you foresee they do not understand a thing, do not ask it them; first explain the thing, and then put your question.

II. Rule.

II. Rule. You should propose your question in such a manner, that the answer may be the clearest---the shortest---and the simplest possible, and never engage children in long discourses. For this purpose, if there be any long reasonings, propose them in parts; afterwards you will collect them together, and put the whole question entire.

III. Rule. You should not discourage them, nor answer yourselves when they do not answer. You must not do it, except it be absolutely necessary. You should rather endeavour to make them understand the thing by turning it different ways.

IV. Rule. You should instruct young people rather by judgment than memory *. You must therefore make them speak, and gain their heart; for, without that, they will not be open, but respect and awe will restrain them.

For this purpose you must have patience, and, in order to that, you must have piety and zeal. This office is disagreeable to a person that wants piety; but to a man, who is pious and zealous for the glory of God, there can be nothing more agreeable.

V. Rule. It is, however, necessary to make them learn something by heart.

* "You should endeavour as soon and as much as you can, to make this (exercise of catechising) a trial, and improvement of the understanding, as well as the memory of young people, by asking such things as they should reply to in words of their own; making that easy to them in every possible way." See this, and many other useful remarks on the importance and method of catechising, in Archbishop Secker's *Charges*, p. 48—52.

1. They will by these means exercise themselves in private. 2. This will prevent them from falling into idleness. But you should explain to them what they have learned, and make them say it in another manner.

VI. Rule. It is of importance to convince them that what you teach them is true. Now there are two principles of certainty, reason and holy scripture.

It is from these you should convince them. Make them sensible that they ought to believe a thing, not because a minister or any other person tells it them; but because it is reason, and because God himself says it. Further, you must gain them by the feelings of their conscience, because then it is yet tender. For this reason it is necessary to make them learn some passages from holy scripture, and to shew them, that what you teach them has been revealed by the Lord himself.

S E C T. V.

Of the End and Use of CATECHISMS.

THE end, that ought to be aimed at in Catechisms, is to make children virtuous, and fearing God. If after you have given them the knowledge of religion, you do not inspire them with piety, you will have profited nothing; you will make them either profligates or hypocrites. The generality of
ministers

ministers think themselves obliged *only* to *instruct*; and children think they have fulfilled their duty, when they have learned to answer the questions proposed to them. This is the source of hypocrisy, and therefore you cannot know too well how to prevent this evil. Let us therefore consider how *Catechisms* may be used to inspire piety.

I. Maxim. You should refer to piety every thing you say to children. You should say nothing to them without making them remark the use of it, in the conduct of life. When you represent to them the truths of religion, you should not content yourselves with a simple explication, but shew their tendency to restrain us from evil. If you propose the subject of *Providence*, or of *Baptism*, &c. which some consider as speculative matters, you should point out the use of them. Just so when you propose to them the duties of Christianity, it is still more necessary to give things a practical turn. See *Causes of Corruption*, Part II. Cause V. You should never commend children, merely because they have answered well; but make them understand, that when they have answered like angels, if they stop there, it is nothing; that the grand point is to practise what they know, and when they practise it, it is then only that they deserve commendations.

II. Maxim. You should convince children that you require nothing from them but what is just. You should gain them by reason---persuasion and conscience; so that if

they believe a thing is necessary, it is not because you have told it them, but because they perceive it to be so. You should not therefore say to them abruptly—*This is what you must believe*,—but you should gain them over by the feelings of conscience. When you are speaking to them of any duty, you should ask them whether they do not feel an inward pleasure when they discharge it, and some uneasiness and trouble when they neglect it. You see how you must inspire them with piety.

III. Maxim. You should labour to form the conscience of children. Their conscience ought to be formed in the earliest age of life; they should be accustomed to act scrupulously. We fall into many faults by acting without reflection. In order to make their conscience tender you should propose some cases of conscience to them. For example, in explaining the viiith *Commandment*, I would ask a child—*Whether he would be pleased with having any thing stolen from him?* No, he will say. *Have you then any more right to do it than others?* I would say, &c. *Would you wish any one should sell you a thing too dear?* You see how it is proper to propose to them cases of conscience. This is one of the most useful maxims you can practise. Propose some of these cases on every kind of subject, on luxury—on injustice—on swearing, &c.

IV. Maxim. I said before that you should instruct in an agreeable manner; to this I add, that you should render piety amiable to them.

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If you do not excite in their heart that love for piety, and that horror for sin, they will never act but from false motives. You should therefore inspire them with exalted sentiments, teach them to despise the world, convince them that there is a great deal of glory in mortifying their feelings and passions, &c. Hence, you see, that they are mistaken, who instruct in an austere manner; children are disgusted at it, because what tends to please, always prevails with them more. You must shew them, that nothing is more happy than the state of a good man; that in sin there is nothing but uneasiness and torment, even when those who commit it appear the most happy; and that, when death comes, they are troubled, and agitated with remorse of conscience; and, therefore, both in this life and the next, the wicked are miserable. For this reason it is proper to shew them examples from scripture, or daily experience.

V. Maxim. What I have been saying relates properly to the morals: but, besides this, you should inspire children with devotion with respect to piety and divine worship. Children are in great danger of becoming hypocrites and praying without attention; you should therefore recommend to them in an especial manner that point, *of praying with attention*. You should ask them privately, *how they pray,—whether they do not meet with distractions, and thoughts that trouble them*. They will say—yes. The best counsel you can give them on this head
is

is—to make short prayers. Set forms often hurt the attention ; therefore ask them, what they think they have need of, and tell them to implore that from God without keeping themselves to forms of prayer. Those are the best prayers that can be made.

VI. Maxim. You should accustom children to look upon sacred things with profound respect. By sacred things I mean God himself—his word—the service we pay him—prayers—circumstances of worship—holy-days—the sabbath—the persons that minister in religion—laws, ceremonies, &c. These are the principles, that should be inculcated in them whilst they are young : when they thus consider things, it is a bridle to restrain them. This is too much neglected amongst us.

VII. Maxim. It is necessary to inspire them with a love for order, This is an excellent thing. This order ought to prevail,

1. In the church—with respect to the authority of pastors—discipline, and good regulations. You should convince them, that a Christian is obliged to submit to these things for conscience sake, unless they are any ways contrary to the gospel.

2. In the state. You should inspire them with love for civil order, for the prince, for magistrates, &c. This regards the sentiments you ought to infuse into children. I shall now speak of the manner in which you should make them practise good and avoid evil.

VIII.

VIII. Maxim. You should avail yourselves of the good dispositions you find in young people. You may suppose, that in all children there is something good; they are not yet wedded to the world. Moreover, being ignorant, and sensible of their ignorance, they will suffer themselves to be led; above all, they have not that sullen malice, which opposes all instructions. It is, therefore, very often either the fault of fathers or pastors, if children have so many bad qualities. When you speak to them privately, you will easily reclaim them; they have, however, sometimes bad dispositions, yet they may be corrected, provided proper care be taken.

IX. Maxim. You must guard them against temptations. Those temptations are either common to all children, or peculiar to some. The former are such as we usually meet with in children. A fault common to that age is lying, which they use in order to conceal all kinds of faults.

You should inspire them with a detachment from pleasure, dissuade them from luxury, gluttony, &c.

You should guard them against pride, which, besides being a great sin, renders men unhappy.

You should inspire them with an aversion from idleness. These are the faults, which you should always study to oppose. There are, besides these, some peculiar faults from which you should dissuade them. For this purpose

purpose you should bring them to acknowledge their own faults—make them sensible—how one man is inclined to anger—another to dissimulation;—that these dispositions will be the source of all their disorders, and so prove sufficient one day to condemn them; that they ought to correct themselves in their youth, as there is no season more proper than that. You should enquire of their fathers and mothers what are the faults of their children, in order to correct them.

X. Maxim. Children meet with temptations from without, against which you should endeavour to guard them. For this end, as often as you see them, you should inculcate these lessons;—that Christians are not what they ought to be, and therefore they must expect to find many disorders in the world. For example, you should say to them, *Do you not hear swearing? Nevertheless, Jesus Christ forbids it.* If you do not remind them of this, they will fancy they may live as others do. But here I must add, that domestic examples are the most dangerous of all. You should therefore forewarn them, that perhaps they will see their fathers and mothers in a passion—swearing, &c. but that they must not suffer themselves to be led astray by that temptation. Against such frequent temptations it is proper to guard them.

XI. The last maxim I have to offer you on this subject is—that when you are to instruct young people, you should speak with them
privately,

privately, and sometimes make them come to your house. If you speak to them in the presence of others, you will make them ashamed, and not enjoy so much liberty.

When their fathers bring them to you, you should inform yourselves of their failings—and study them yourselves, for they do not disguise them.

When you shall have admonished them for any fault, see that they are in time reclaimed from it. Inform yourselves whether they have corrected themselves, ask them whether they do not feel joy and satisfaction from being corrected. If they say, yes—encourage them in it, and assure them that they will find that joy constantly increasing. You will by these means have the pleasure of seeing the fruits of your labours; and by this you will contribute much more to the glory of God, than by your sermons.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

LECTURE IX.

S E C T. I.

*Of the GOVERNMENT of the CHURCH—
Its Importance and Difficulty.*

IF the ministry were to be considered in the light it usually is, I should have nothing more to say to you on this subject.

Most ministers imagine, that the whole of our employment consists merely in preaching. I have before shewn you that the generality have not just ideas of preaching. But supposing them to have preached as they ought, they will not have discharged their duty, if they neglect the government of the church. For this reason I propose to speak to you on the Government of the Church in this *second* part.

It seems to me very necessary to give you some rules on this subject; because we have still fewer aids for ecclesiastical government, than for preaching: We want assistance with respect to precepts, examples, and books.

I. No precepts or instructions are given in our academies for forming young people to the
management

management of the church. They pass indeed some censures upon the propositions they give out, but you know, from experience, that they say nothing about that other function of the ministry. This arises from two sources.

1. The professors do not teach things which the generality of them think nothing about, and which do not appear to them of sufficient importance.

2. This arises from our having amongst us nothing fixed about discipline. We have as many different customs as we have countries, and churches*; so that, if the professors were disposed to speak about it, they would either not know what to say, or not agree with each other. I believe also they do not speak upon it, because, perhaps, they would dispute about it, as they do about points of doctrine.

II. We cannot be instructed in the Government of the Church by examples. This Government is not, like preaching, exhibited to the view of every body; it is a function discharged in secret. Young students may be profited from sermons; but when the pastors proceed to discipline, they do it in private, and the students are not admitted. This makes them so extremely ignorant about it.

* Our author has elsewhere lamented it as a great unhappiness, that churches have little or no intercourse or communication with each other, so that every one orders its matters and customs, the form of its worship and government, within itself.—See *Causes of Corruption. Part II. Cause I.*

III. We

III. We have scarcely any assistance from books*. If books did but supply the want of our instructions and examples, that would be something; but we are destitute of such a supply. In the Romish church the young priests have books which are of use to instruct them; but the Protestants, so far as I know, have nothing exact upon the subject. The Reformers indeed have left us some pieces.

BUCER wrote a *Treatise de Animarum Curâ*,—but there are many deficiencies in it.

We have also GAUSSEN *de Usu Clavium*, but he does not treat of the other functions of ecclesiastical government.

We have, further, something upon discipline in the writings of the Reformers, but we have no compleat treatise. As this is the case, need we be surprized, if many ministers are ignorant what ecclesiastical government is—are every moment at a stand—are alarmed at the least case that happens, and enter upon the ministry without knowing how to exercise it?

All these considerations have determined me to give you some rules on this subject. The first thing you should consider is the importance of this *second part*, and the necessity of our being instructed in the things we are to speak upon. If I were inclined to treat this subject *ex professo*, I might prove, that minis-

* Our Clergy in England have happily, in this point, but little cause for complaint. We have many useful, and some excellent books that treat of Ecclesiastical Discipline and Government.—Amongst these are JOHNSON'S *Vade Mecum*, 2 vols. 12mo, and Dr. BURN'S *Ecclesiastical Law*, 4 vols. 8vo.

ters are called to govern the church. I might establish this truth from scripture, from the names and functions that are there assigned to pastors. I might prove it, in the second place, from the nature of the thing itself; for it is impossible to advance the glory of God without it. Lastly, from the practice of the first Christians. But that would engage me too far; and besides, I have already spoken of it in *my Treatise on the Causes of Corruption, Part II. Cause ii and iii.* to which I refer you. I shall content myself with making here some few reflections.

I. *Reflection.* The ministry of most pastors produces little fruit, because they do not apply themselves to ecclesiastical government. We blame many Christians for contenting themselves with making an outward profession of the gospel, but is not the same blame chargeable upon those ministers, that content themselves with preaching. They preach, and talk, but do not put their hand to the work. They resemble a magistrate that enacts good laws, but never gives himself any trouble to make them observed. Such is the case of those who neglect this part of the ministry. Take two ministers, suppose one of them to preach well, but not to enforce the observance of order in his church, whilst the other preaches but indifferently, yet makes order prevail; the latter will undoubtedly produce much the greatest fruit: Happy are they who possess both these

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talents!

talents! That is what you should aim at, and labour to attain.

II. *Reflection.* By not paying attention to government many ministers fall into idleness; if they were careful about this point, they would never rest satisfied, nor think themselves at liberty to be engrossed by different things, that have no relation to their office, nor ever imagine they had done all, when they had preached. Ministers are the more apt to fall into remissness with respect to the pains they should take of their flocks, because there is no law* which expressly obliges them to take that pains; whereas there are laws that constrain them to preach in public on certain days. Hence also arises a loss of time; for I call time lost, not only when it is squandered away in amusements or idleness; but also when it is not employed in the manner it ought to be, and when it is totally devoted to preaching. He, that is sensible his office engages him to the management of his flock, will always have employment, and find his time short.

III. *Reflection.* When ministers are unacquainted with ecclesiastical government, it gives occasion for reproaching them with this defect, that *they are good for nothing but preaching; are destitute of conduct and prudence, and are not fit for their business.*

* What a pity the *Law of Conscience* should be allowed so little weight and attention by many, who ought to allow it the greatest!—What a shame the commands of God should ever meet with less respect than the laws of men!

Such is a good preacher, who makes a pitiful figure in the management of his flock. It is with such ministers, as with those scholars who have studied much, but are ignorant of life, and unfit for society.

IV. *Reflection.* We are in danger of wanting zeal and piety. I am aware indeed, that preaching may inspire some zeal; but the inspection of a flock does it more effectually, and lays quite another restraint upon the conscience. A minister who thinks himself obliged to admonish sinners *, to take care of the sick, &c. has a far better sense of the account he must give to God, than a man who imagines he has nothing to do but to preach.

As this subject is of importance, so is it of great extent, and is not without its difficulties, because it comprehends a vast number of things. In the exercise of discipline in our consistories—in visiting the sick, &c. you will not find many occasions, on which you must act in the same manner, but cases are infinitely various. Moreover, whatever rules I give you, I must inform you that these things are still better learned from practice and experience, than precepts; and this requires some time. On this account we may say, *Ars longa, vita brevis*. It is proper, however, to take care to have some knowledge of these things before you

* Every priest in our established church must think himself obliged to the observance of these great duties—unless he can think it lawful to forget the solemn promises and engagements entered into at the time of his ordination.—See SECKER'S *Charges*, p. 337.

enter upon practice, lest, in imitation of some ignorant physicians, you should learn your art at the expence of souls.

The plan I shall follow in this second part is this.

I. I shall speak of the general discipline of of the church, which is exercised by pastors and consistories; and must shew you—1. What are the laws of discipline—2. How they are to be observed.

II. I shall proceed to private discipline; so I call that care which a minister should take in private, which relates partly to the church in general---and partly to certain persons in particular. That care, which relates to the church in general, consists in these four things;

1. In knowing his church.

2. In a proper method of living in his church.

3. In taking pains to make order and piety prevail.

4. In studying how to preserve his authority.

That care which relates to certain persons in particular consists,

1. In private admonitions.

2. In visiting the sick, and what concerns criminals.

S E C T. II.

Of DISCIPLINE in general.

ECCLESIASTICAL Government, taken in a general sense, implies every thing that regards pastors, and every thing that has any relation to the church; such as worship, the calling and election of pastors, &c. Though I am not disposed to give you a circumstantial detail of these things, yet I must observe to you, that in all these points many things might be rectified, and many others established. I will not, however, speak of them in this view;—that would be too tedious; and, besides, that particularly concerns ecclesiastical bodies. I shall therefore content myself with shewing you what you must do, when you are called to the management of a flock.

I shall begin with speaking of Discipline in general, on which two things offer themselves to our consideration. 1. Its necessity. 2. Its nature.

I. With respect to the first article, I understand by Discipline, the order that is established in the church for the sake of governing it, and removing scandals from it. I should first prove, that it is of divine institution, and answer the objections that are made against this institution; but I refer you again to *the Causes of Corruption*, Part II. Cause ii. You should persuade yourselves, that this is of

the greatest consequence, and should bless God that you live in a country where there are some remains of Discipline, though endeavours are used to rob us of it.

II. I must therefore pass on to the nature of this Discipline. For this purpose, as in civil government there is a necessity for enacting good laws, and seeing them duly observed, it will be proper likewise to consider these two things in Discipline;

1. What are the laws of it;
2. How they are to be applied and observed.

S E C T. III.

Of the LAWS of DISCIPLINE.

Of Divine Laws.

THE Laws of Discipline are of two kinds, *divine* and *human*. The divine laws are found in the *New Testament*. I do not mean, that we find there the decision of every case; that would be infinite: but we there find all the fundamental laws and maxims of Discipline. The application of these laws was left to the wisdom of the church. If you read the writings of the New Testament, and especially the Epistles of ST. PAUL, you will learn from them, that God would have order in the church; that the exercise of Discipline belongs

to

to pastors*, and reaches all kinds of persons; that pastors should admonish sinners, expel scandalous offenders, and receive those that repent to the peace of the church. This is likewise confirmed by the example of the incestuous man of CORINTH—of HYMENÆUS and PHILÆTUS, &c.

These laws are the foundation and essence of Discipline; and what has been added since, are nothing but explications of those laws.

I must also observe to you one thing respecting divine laws, which is, that the church has a right to regulate, in every particular, what should be observed, provided she acts conformably to the gospel. I remark this, because it is a thing which is not sufficiently attended to amongst us, and is one of the sources of libertinism. That the church has this right, I prove from what ST. PAUL says, *Let all things be done decently, and in order.* Why should he say this, if the church had not a right to make laws, and to require every one to submit to them, supposing their conformity with the gospel.

* There are several reflections on this subject worthy of a young Clergyman's attentive perusal, in the *Preface* to *Johnson's Vade Mecum*, Vol. II. and in Dr. ROGERS's *Discourse of the visible and invisible Church of Christ*, Part II. Chap. vi, vii.

S E C T. IV.

Of HUMAN LAWS.

I COME now to Human Laws. I do not consider all the regulations that have been made as laws of discipline. All that have been made since the *sixth century* are very bad. But to confine myself to what you should know, I have this to observe to you, that there are two sorts of Human Laws—those of the primitive church, and those which are observed amongst us.

S E C T. V.

Of the LAWS of the PRIMITIVE CHURCH.

I SPEAK of the Laws of the *primitive Church*, because they have something venerable, and were made in the time the church was governed by *inspired persons*, and when it was in its purest state.

It is remarkable, that one of the first cares of the *primitive church* was to establish good order. In the *ancient councils* they had much fewer articles of doctrine, than of discipline. Hence I must desire you to observe, how far we are removed from the spirit of the first Christians,

Christians, since those ancient laws are not more respected among us.

Finally, Those laws were made by degrees; hence it is that we have not a body of ancient discipline, which, however, were much to be wished for. There is indeed an excellent piece, the *Apostolical Canons*, so called, not because the apostles were the authors of them; that epithet, *Apostolical*, only implies that they are ancient establishments, and were observed in the churches which the apostles had founded.

Mr. DAILLÉ *, and several others have endeavoured to make those canons suspected; and it cannot be denied, that some of them were made after others; but they are nevertheless of venerable antiquity, and it may be proved, that some of them were made before the council of NICE. Besides these, we have the *acts* of the councils; but their number is almost infinite, and they contain quite opposite decisions. To understand the discipline of the primitive Christians we must draw our knowledge † of them from two sources; from the most ancient councils, and from ecclesiastical authors.

* It cannot be wondered that so violent an oppugner of episcopacy as Mr. Daillé (who is on that account censured by our author, Lect. II.) should labour to invalidate, as much as possible, the authority of those canons, which have so distinctly and fully asserted the office and pre-eminence of bishops in the primitive church. But his arguments on this head have been long since answered by *Bishop Beveridge*, and *Cotelerius*.—See *Johnson's Vade Mecum*, Vol. II. Pref. p. cvii.

† Much useful knowledge of this kind may be obtained from *JOHNSON'S Vade Mecum*,—and much more from Mr. BINGHAM'S *Antiquities of the Christian Church*.

Those

Those who have written upon the discipline of the first Christians are JUSTIN MARTYR, ORIGEN, ST. CYPRIAN, TERTULLIAN, &c. They should be examined with care, because they have written some apologies. They have also related the ancient, and constant practice. What we may collect from their writings is this, that Bishops did not content themselves with preaching, but they likewise watched over their flocks. They frequently censured, and even excommunicated scandalous offenders. Those who had been excommunicated were obliged to pass through several degrees of *penance*, and, if they gave signs of repentance, they were by degrees received, and at length entirely reconciled to the church by the imposition of the hands of the priests. You may consult on this point the famous passage of TERTULLIAN Apolog. Chap. 39.

To give you some idea of the *ancient* church you must know what persons were excommunicated, and the manner of proceeding against them.

I. They who had committed any gross sin were excommunicated. Amongst other sins that were punished with the greatest severity were these three;—Apostacy, Adultery, and Murder. Those, however, who committed some less crimes, were not exempt from censures and excommunication.

II. With respect to the manner there was a double excommunication. By the first, sinners were prohibited the sacraments. By the second,

cond, they were entirely cut off from the communion of the church. Such as had incurred this second excommunication lay under it a long time. They were sometimes enjoined a penance of thirty years. That time, however, was shortened at the recommendation of the Martyrs, and that relaxation was called *indulgence*. This gave occasion to the *indulgences* in the *Romish church*; but relapsers after penance were never received again to the peace of the church*.

Hence it is, that penance may be compared to baptism, which is never repeated.

Penitents are distinguished into four classes.

The first were called the *mourners*. They stood at the church-door weeping, and begging of those that went in to intercede for them.

The second were the *bearers*. They might hear the word as the *Catechumens* did, but they went away when the eucharist was celebrated.

The third were the *prostrators*, who laid themselves prostrate in certain parts of the church.

The fourth were the *co-standers*, who attended during the whole service and even the celebration of the eucharist, but did not com-

* Though bishops were allowed the power of increasing or abating the terms, and the severity of penance, at their own discretion, yet this severity was *almost* universally practised during the four first ages of the church; but was abated in after ages, without any reflection on the preceding practice.—Bingham, Book XVIII. Chap. IV.

municate.

municate *. Lastly, when they had undergone these punishments, they were restored by the imposition of hands from the bishop.

S E C T. VI.

Of the LAWS that are observed amongst us.

I SHALL not speak now of the practice of other churches, but content myself with giving you an idea of the discipline of this country. We have, in general, more discipline than other Protestant churches †. What we have is this.

I. Discipline is in the hands of the ministers, and those who are united with them, who may be considered as ecclesiastics. They are the pastors that preside in our consistories. I remark this, because it is not the same with *those* churches of *Switzerland*, where the discipline is in the hands of the magistrate that presides there, and they have ministers only for form.

II. Our discipline is purely spiritual. We, nevertheless, sometimes make use also of civil

* A fuller account of these four orders of penitents may be seen in JOHNSON, *ut supra*, p. 53. 2d Edit. and Bingham, Book XVIII. Ch. I.

† We have in this section a striking proof of our author's unprejudiced and liberal attention to truth, both in his commendations and censures of his own church. — Whilst he points out some of her faults with freedom and fidelity—he seems happy in remarking some of her excellencies: One cannot but admire that ingenuous and amiable spirit, which makes a writer, *Most pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame.*

punishments,

punishments, but then the magistrate inflicts them.

III. We use *suspension from the sacraments*, and *public penance*. These things are not practised amongst our neighbours. These reflections may convince you, that amongst protestants there are yet many things to reform. But amongst several faults in our discipline, I find these two :

The first regards the persons against whom we exercise discipline. We do not subject to discipline all those whom the word of God subjects to it. We proceed against adulterers—drunkards, those who govern their families ill, &c.

There is a second, and still greater fault, and that is—our manner of exercising discipline. We have only *suspension*, so that if a man despises that suspension, the church is at a stand. In reality, the magistrate then acts, but it would be proper for the church to act independently of the magistrate. It were therefore to be wished, that we had the use of *excommunication*. At least it would be right to take a middle way—and that would be, to expose publicly those sinners that despise suspension *. Something of

* The practice our author here recommends with regard to *suspension*, or the *less excommunication*, is similar to that which obtained in the ancient church, with respect to the *greater excommunication*; for such excommunication was commonly notified by circular letters, or some other means, to all other churches.—Bingham, Book XVI. Chap. II. §. 9.—And he, that was thus excommunicated in one church, was held excommunicate in all churches.—Ibid. §. 10.

this

this kind was done in a *particular* case, about five years ago at *Linières*. I remark these faults to you, that you may one day endeavour, if it be possible, to remedy them.

I should first of all inform you, in whose hands our discipline is placed. As there are two sorts of bodies—the one ecclesiastical—the other political, it is proper to observe, how each of them interpose in matters of discipline.

S E C T. VII.

Of ECCLESIASTICAL BODIES.

THERE are two Ecclesiastical Bodies. The consistories,—and the society of pastors.

I. With respect to consistories discipline is in the hands of the pastors and elders.

As to the pastors I shall say nothing, because that is clear. It is their province to preside—to direct the assembly—to collect the votes, &c.

Besides pastors there are elders. It has been much disputed, whether elders are of divine institution. Some think that CALVIN was the author of that institution, and that before his time the discipline belonged to the bishop, and pastors, or priests. Others think, there were some in the *primitive* church, that were called Πρεσβυτεροι. But in my opinion, that word signifies

nifies nothing else than priests *. However that be, the institution of elders appears absolutely requisite in our churches, because there is but one pastor, and it would be utterly impossible for a single man to have the inspection over a whole flock. Whereas, formerly, a bishop had always a great number of ecclesiastics united with him.

Now the office of the elders is this. They are obliged to fix things.

1. They are to watch over the morals of Christians.

2. They are to inform the pastors of such faults as deserve to be informed against, and of scandalous offences; but they must not extend that information to trifles, and such things as are not deserving of punishment.

3. The elders may also perform some functions—when they are not very important—such as reconciling—and admonishing sinners, &c.

4. They judge with the pastor—and are united with him to serve him as a council; and in this point the order observed amongst us is this, they follow the majority of votes. If, however, the elders should take the wrong side, a pastor has a right to supersede the execution, and to *act as a society*.

5. They ought to take care of the affairs of the church—*act as treasurers*—take care of the poor—cite into the consistory, &c.

* Here we see another proof of our Author's freedom from prejudice and bigotry: He was too ingenuous to assert the institution of elders—or their existence in the *primitive church*, tho' he judiciously asserts the use and necessity of them in his *own*.

6. They

6. They are obliged to lead exemplary lives.

From hence you see, that it is of consequence to have good elders. For this purpose, a minister should choose out people of good sense and probity—converse much with them, teach them discipline—and always inspire them with a desire of advancing the glory of God—a love for order, &c.

It is, further, proper to inform you on this subject, in what manner elders are elected. When there is a want of an elder, the pastor, after he has invoked the name of God, demands the votes of his consistory. Then on the Sunday following, after sermon, the minister acquaints the people from the pulpit, that such a person has been elected to fill up the place of an elder.

Observe here what should be done, but is not done amongst us—that is, to give notice, eight days before, that if any one has any thing to object against the person elected, he may speak it. Further, when an elder is presented, he is reminded of the nature of his engagements. After that, the people are exhorted to consider him in that quality, and to treat him with respect. It is proper, however, to inform you, that there are some communities that oppose this order.

II. I proceed, in the second place, to speak to you of the society of pastors, which is the second ecclesiastical body, and to shew you what part they take in the exercise of discipline. This may be reduced to these three things.

I. The

1. The minister can make no innovation in the church without the consent of the class. We are sworn to this article, as necessary to prevent innovation and abuse. When, therefore, you shall have any design that is good, pious, and useful, you must not endeavour to establish it, till after you have acquainted the society with it. This too is proper to be done, that you may save yourselves—not ruin one another—and may preserve uniformity.

2. The society makes general regulations, but does not decide upon particular cases. It regulates, for instance, where marriages should be solemnized—what persons are subject to public penance : it has the inspection of all the churches in the state, and orders pastors to preach upon such or such a subject.

3. The part which the society has in perplexing and extraordinary cases is this : It takes cognizance of them, whether the consistories require the advice of the society, or the pastor, in particular, wishes to know the intention of the whole body. But it neither takes cognizance in order to decide, nor cites parties, unless it be for the sake of information ; for the business is always referred to the pastor or consistory. It is not, therefore, properly the society that exercises discipline. If, however, a consistory manifestly errs, it may be opposed.

S E C T. VIII.

Of POLITICAL BODIES.

WITH respect to Political Bodies, you are to observe how the magistrate interposes in discipline. He does it in two ways.

1. By the prince's officer.
2. By the consistory-courts under the jurisdiction of the sovereign.

I. The prince's officer attends in the consistories, and has a vote as well as an elder. He may likewise punish sinners, and they, who do it, ought to be commended. He must, however, never proceed to that—except in the last extremity; that disheartens sinners; and even those corporal punishments inflicted by the magistrate do not affect the conscience. That was never the practice of the ancient church*.

What you should further remark here is this, that whenever it is necessary to have recourse to the magistrate, the church betrays her weakness, and you see the consequences that ill-disposed magistrates may draw from it. In short, one great inconvenience is this—that when we have recourse, without necessity, to the secular

* There were some slight exceptions to this general maxim—with respect to junior monks—and the inferior clergy.—Bingham, Book XVI. Chap. III. § 11.—The minor clergy were sometimes punished with stripes for the same crimes, for which the superior clergy were punished with excommunication for a year.

arm. we submit ecclesiastical authority and discipline to the magistrate, for he does not judge without knowledge of the cause; and, besides, we make ourselves troublesome.

I conclude, therefore, that it is proper to keep, as much as possible, to spiritual methods, which bind the conscience. But you will say—*if a sinner be hardened, what must be done?* It is better to let him alone. JESUS CHRIST does not wish for people that serve him against their will. We should say to them, as our Saviour said to JUDAS,—*What thou doest, do quickly.* If we had the use of *excommunication*, we should not be perplexed, and should have no occasion to have recourse to any person.

Upon this subject of the officer that attends in the consistory, I must apprize you of one point of discipline; which is—that in order to inflict any civil punishment, he cannot take advantage of a confession that was made in the consistory, unless he cannot discover the fact *controverted from another place.*

II. We have in this country consistories under the jurisdiction of the sovereign. There are two of them; one at Valangin, for all the churches *dependent* on Valangin; and the other at Môtiers, for all the churches of *Val Trevers*. The prince presides there by his officer, and the principal assessors are the ministers.

The reason of these consistories being established was this:

1. To bring to order rebellious offenders by civil punishments.

O 2

2. To

2. To make such, as had committed any gross crimes, submit to the punishments decreed by the statutes. But they were not established for exercising ecclesiastical discipline.

You must here observe, that these consistories can only take cognisance of such things, as are referred to them by the ordinary consistories. This is their right—but I must inform you, that the consistory of Valangin has above all usurped these two things :

1. It claims the power of suspending from the sacrament, and of taking off suspensions, which belongs to the pastors and consistories of every church.

2. It pretends to the province of admitting to public penances.

As to that of *Val Travers*, it is at present well-regulated. For this reason, we should be on our guard ; for if these consistories had all the rights they pretend to, discipline would belong to the prince. In short, they are not very necessary.

LECTURE X.

S E C T. I.

The Manner of PROCEEDING in our Consistories.

THAT you may understand how discipline is exercised in our consistories*, I will speak of it in order.

I. The first thing we do is to begin with prayer. The pastor offers up a prayer,

1. To implore the assistance of God for those who exercise discipline, that they may do it with zeal, prudence, charity, &c.

2. He prays for the sinners that are summoned into the consistory, and desires of God that he would move them, &c.

3. He prays, in particular, for the church of the place, &c.

II. We take information concerning the facts, of which we are to take cognisance. This is done particularly on the days we give notice of the sacrament ; for then we assemble the con-

* An useful account of our ecclesiastical discipline, is given by JOHNSON in his *Vade Mecum*, Vol. I. Chap. XIX, and XXVI.

fistory, and take a review of the church. This is likewise done as often as the consistory is assembled; for when we have examined the cases in question, we enquire of the elders, whether they know of any thing that deserves to be reported—and that we should take cognisance of. Hereupon every one tells what he knows, and we order such persons as are accused to be cited into the next consistory. Observe, that when we cite any person, we do not tell him the reason for which he is to appear before the consistory, because he ought to obey without knowing what the business is.

III. It may be asked, for what case a man is called before the consistory. On this head you must observe these three things:

1. The cases must be important. 2. They should be true and certain. 3. They should be public—or at least—should be known to a sufficient number of people, and not secret.

1. You must take care that the cases are important. Some ministers cite people into the consistory for the least offence, by which means they let down the dignity of the consistories, and their authority. *But what must be done in matters of less importance?*—The pastor should make the offenders come to his own house, and should admonish them privately; or, if he is not willing to have them come to him, he should get them admonished by one of the elders.

2. It is proper the facts should be certain and true. Such, for instance, are facts of public notoriety, or such as are known for certain by
other

other means. Here I must observe to you, that facts reported by elders are considered as proved, because, being persons in public office, they are to be credited.

It must, however, be remarked, that this is not to be carried too far. For, when an elder reports any thing that does not belong to his office, or that concerns himself in particular, whatever personal injury may have been done him, he is not to be credited; but in things within the sphere of his office, he ought to be credited.

When sufficient certainty cannot be obtained either from the elders, or by other means, then recourse must be had to a more ample information. On this point, it is a matter of question in this country—*Whether we can make witnesses speak in the consistory?* The magistrate pretends we cannot. The scripture, notwithstanding, gives us this right, 1 Tim. v. 19. *Receive not an accusation but before two or three witnesses.* This manifestly supposes, that we may oblige them to give evidence. We tender no oath to these people, but we charge them by the name of God to speak the truth.

But what must be done, when we cannot be satisfied of a fact, either by witnesses, or by any other means?

It must be attentively considered—whether the rumour about it be secret—or public. If it be secret, it is proper to admonish the offenders in private, and not summon them before the consistory. If that rumour, however un-

certain, be public, the person should then be called before the consistory---not to be compelled to a confession, but to be informed of the report that has prevailed---and to be told what a sin he would commit, if he should conceal the fact. You might tell him, that he ought to abstain even from the appearances of evil, &c.

This should be particularly practised in flagrant cases. If a man is accused of infamous commerce, and the rumour about it is secret, he should not even be summoned to the pastor's house; but if it be public, he should be summoned there privately, and admonished of his duty. If he pays no attention to that, he should then be cited into the consistory.

III. The fact must be known to a great number of people. For example, it is known for a certainty that a man is guilty of a crime, the fact is important and certain, but it is secret; it is not proper, in that case, to make the affair public, but he should, at the most, be only admonished in private.

Hence you see that confessions, made to a pastor, must not be brought into the consistory.

But how can we manage the conscience of a sinner?---You must lay him under some penance, enjoin him to keep from the communion, and oblige him after a certain time to come and acquaint you with his state, that you may give him some new advice.

IV. The method of proceeding with those that are cited into the consistory is this, they who are cited either appear, or not. If they do

do not appear, except they have a good excuse—such as sickness, or a necessary journey, &c. they are thenceforth treated as *contumacious*, and are prohibited from the communion*. On this point you are to know, that it is sufficient that a man has been cited once, though some people would have this put upon the same footing with *civil judicature*, and pretend that he should be cited three times. If the offenders appear, you must not begin with censuring them---but should first explain to them the fact for which they have been cited, then make them consent to it---and lead them to confess it, if the case requires confession; for sometimes we cause them to be cited only for the sake of giving them admonitions.

Now to know when they should be made to confess, and when not, one rule is this. When the safety of the sinner is concerned, and he is in danger without that confession, you must then endeavour to bring him to it. But, if the crime is not capital, and the conscience may be satisfied without it, you should not compel him to it. For example, a man is accused of fornication *in form*; in that case, you should endeavour to make him confess it; for a pastor may suppose for a time, that the party accused is injured. I say, further, if the crime is secret, the sinner is not obliged to confess it in public;

* It is the same with us. The *less excommunication* is pronounced by judges ecclesiastical on such persons, as are guilty of obstinacy, or disobedience, in not appearing upon a citation, or not submitting to penance, or other injunctions of the court. — Burn. Vol. II. Page 201.

but

but, if the crime be public, there must be a *confession made of the nature of the crime*, and so it must be owned publicly.

Now observe what must be done in order to bring an offender to confession. The offender may be in one of these two circumstances. Either there are proofs and convictions against him, or there are not.---If there be any, then the business is not to sound his conscience, nor to call the fact into *question*. The offender must only be conjured to give glory to God. Now convictions are valid, when they are agreeable to laws and discipline, and those who are thus convicted may deny if they will, but they must be proceeded against.

But, if there be no conviction, there is but one way to take, and that is to conjure the offender, by the name of God, to declare the truth. He must have hell opened to his view, and be told that he is lying to God, and putting himself into a state of damnation, &c. He must be conjured proportionably to the crime and nature of the fact. If he confesses, God should be *praised* for it : If he denies, he must be consigned over to the judgment of God, and his own conscience, and be reminded that he puts himself into a state of damnation.

V. Let us see what is to be done, when offenders have confessed, or denied. If they have confessed, it must be considered what their crime deserves. If they deny, although there is conviction against them, they are laid under an interdict, till they have acknowledged their crime, or proved their innocence.

But

But to shew how we are to proceed against offenders, agreeably to the desert of their crimes: there are four means to be employed against them. 1. Exhortation or censure. 2. Obliging them to give some marks of repentance. 3. Suspending them from the communion. 4. Obliging them to do public penance.

There is a great deal of difference between these four means. The two first should be employed in all cases; offenders have always occasion for them. But the two other means are not necessary, except on some occasions. We will speak of these four means hereafter.

VI. Let us see the method of receiving offenders to the peace of the church, and announcing the pardon of their sins. You are not to come to this, till you find the means that have been employed have produced their end, and the sinners are affected. What you are to observe here is this:

1. When the sinner is hardened, you must not receive him. There are some ministers who imagine, that the bare appearance in the consistory fully satisfies all the obligations that sinners are under. They consider the consistory as a civil tribunal, whereas it is a tribunal of conscience. But it is not so, when you find sinners *contumacious*; you should then assure them, that their sins are retained.

They who flatter sinners in their sermons, are the cause of their being hardened. But they do them much more harm, when they flatter them in the consistories, because then they speak
to

to the finners in particular. If, therefore, they appear hardened, so far from receiving them to the peace of the church, you should announce to them the wrath of God, and *dismiss* them.

2. With respect to those who shew marks of repentance, however satisfactory, you should remind them of one thing, which is a principle of great importance, and a necessary precaution; which is, that signs of repentance are very deceitful. You should therefore always assure sinners that God sees their hearts, and cannot be deceived. It should here be considered, that we have more certainty of what is bad, than of what is good.

The signs of obduracy are not equivocal, but those of repentance are very dubious. For instance, in cases of reconciliation, a man who is unwilling to pardon, and unwilling to be reconciled, is manifestly known to be under bad dispositions. But when another would be reconciled, we cannot form so certain a judgment of his repentance, and his piety, because a man is very often only reconciled outwardly. When, therefore, you speak to such sinners as give signs of impenitance, you should speak to them plainly and openly. But when you are concerned with a man that shews signs of repentance, you should indeed express to him some satisfaction, but you should only speak to him in a conditional and uncertain manner.

S E C T. II.

*A particular Account of our DISCIPLINE; and
ist, Of EXHORTATION and CENSURE.*

I Have said before, that in our consistories four things are done. 1. There is Exhortation and Censure. 2. We oblige sinners to give Marks of Repentance. 3. There is Suspension. 4. Public Penance.

To begin with the first of these, I might distinguish between Exhortation and Censure, but to avoid multiplying things I shall unite them: When we have nothing to do but to give warnings, we may content ourselves with Exhortation; but when the sinner has acknowledged his crime, we make use of Censure. This is a more difficult matter than many think it. You must not imagine that to speak two or three words, by way of form, is sufficient; but you must do it with zeal---and with a sincere intention to reclaim sinners. More talents are requisite than many imagine for the discharge of this duty, especially when we cannot be prepared for it: And yet it is necessary to consider, what we say upon these occasions. For this purpose, there is need of good sense; we must not go on too fast---nor say any thing but what is proper to be said---but suppress

suppress whatever it would be improper to speak: There is need of memory to retain every thing we have remarked, and of presence of mind to take the right part immediately---to speak with justness and facility---to say nothing of zeal, charity, &c. This shews you that you should endeavour to acquire all these talents.

Hence also you should observe, that it is proper that Exhortations should be proportioned to the fact you are concerned about; above all, it is always proper to speak to sinners in such a manner as may affect, persuade, and convince them.

For this purpose, it is not sufficient merely to exhort and conjure, it is sometimes necessary to reason with them, especially when they are perverse and prejudiced; for offenders would often submit, if they were not prejudiced. Sometimes a small difficulty is the only thing that prevents them from submitting. To supply what should here be said on the manner of exhorting and censuring, I must refer you to what I have said of it in speaking upon the application of a sermon.

S E C T. III.

SINNERS *must be required to give* MARKS
of REPENTANCE.

WHEN sinners appear before you in the consistory, you should draw from them Marks of Repentance.

You cannot arrive at an absolute certainty in this point; you should, however, take all possible precautions.

Marks of Repentance are equivocal: For this reason it is necessary to be convinced, as far as possible, of the sincerity of that repentance. We discern it in general:

1. When sinners shew docility and submission, when they are ready to ask pardon of God, and to do all we require from them.

2. There are other particular acts to which they should be led; such as promising to renounce certain habits and connections---to be reconciled---to repair the injuries they have done---to make restitution, and to implore pardon from God. Amongst us, when the crime is considerable we bring them on their knees.

When they are not willing to discharge these duties, they must not be received to the peace of the church; but it is proper they should discharge these duties *sincerely*. They should never be compelled to do any thing against their wills, they must never be authoritatively commanded

commanded to do such, or such a thing. On the contrary, they should be told, that if they do not do it with all their hearts, they should let it alone; for discipline relates solely to the conscience.

S E C T. IV.

Of SUSPENSION from the SACRAMENT.

I PROCEED to Suspension from the Sacrament which is otherwise called---the *less excommunication*.

I have five things to observe to you on this subject. Let us consider, 1. Its necessity. 2. Its nature. 3. The cases in which we suspend. 4. The time of that suspension. 5. The effects of it.

I. I say, that we ought to suspend sinners from the communion. This is a thing which the unhappiness of the times---and the little order in our churches, oblige us to prove.

I prove it thus.

1. Because the scripture forbids us to treat scandalous sinners, as our brethren, and to eat with them. With much greater reason therefore ought they to be prohibited from celebrating, with the faithful, so holy a feast as the Lord's Supper.

2. Amongst the Jews, it is evident, that they who were under any defilement might not eat of the passover, though their defilement was only

only external. Now, by an argument *a fortiori*, avowed sinners ought not to be admitted to the communion. Besides, Jesus Christ forbids us to cast pearls before swine, which may be applied to the sacrament.

3. The third proof is taken from the primitive church, which regulated her discipline by that of the Jews, and excluded such as were defiled from the sacrament.

4. I prove it from the nature of the thing itself. When it is manifest that a man is not in a state of salvation, we may be sure that if a man communicates, he will be guilty of a sacrilegious and profane act. He should not, therefore, be allowed to come to the Lord's table.

But you will say, *how many hypocrites are there who communicate?*---I answer, that perhaps those people have repented. Besides, as they are not known, charity should lead us to judge favourably of them.

5. The edification of the church requires that scandalous offenders should be excluded from the sacrament*; for it is a kind of reparation that sinners make for the scandal they have given. The edification of the offenders likewise requires it; for if every body were allowed to communicate, sinners would be hardened in their crimes.

Here may be objected the example of JUDAS, whom JESUS CHRIST admitted to the com-

* The clergy of our church are authorized to repel *all open and notorious offenders* from the *sacrament*, provided they give an account of the same to the ordinary, within fourteen days after at the farthest.——See the *Rubric before the Communion-service*.

munion with the other apostles. To this we may answer first, that it is not quite certain that *Judas* did communicate. Besides, he had not yet committed his crime, and there was none but Jesus Christ that knew his design. This example, therefore, concludes nothing in favour of those scandalous sinners, whose crimes are known.

II. We must consider what this suspension is. We sometimes advise people not to communicate; but this is not suspension. When, for instance, a man has not appeared on being cited into the consistory, we advise him not to communicate, till he has appeared there; or when any one has had a quarrel with another, though he had right on his side, yet if he cannot be reconciled to his adversary, we advise him to keep from the communion, till he is reconciled. Notwithstanding, if it should be only for one Sunday, and he should give some marks of reconciliation, he may be admitted to it.

III. As to the cases, for which we should suspend people; we must not, in general, proceed so far too hastily, but try all other methods. To give you some idea of our practice, there are two rules to be observed.

1. We suspend for considerable crimes—for such as occasion scandal—and expose to public penance; such as adultery, prophane swearing, and drunkenness, when the sin is aggravated by odious circumstances; to these should be added habitual sins—attended by relapses.

2. We

2. We suspend likewise for less considerable crimes, such as contumacy and disobedience. A refusal to obey the consistory has always been considered as a great crime, though the fault for which they rebelled were a slight one. If any man, who is cited into the consistory, refuses to appear, he is immediately suspended for his refusal, independently of the fact for which he was cited. When we take off the suspension, we require two things; reparation for the fault, and for the contumacy; and of this we make part of the censure.

IV. The time of the suspension varies according to the exigence of the case. When the fault is slight, the suspension continues till the offender has made satisfaction. If it is necessary to proceed to public penance, we require greater and longer satisfactions. If there be any who shew themselves incorrigible, we suspend them till they are reformed.

V. We must see what effects suspension from the sacrament produces. It is not with this, at present, as it was formerly. For those, that were suspended from the communion, were suspended likewise from all other offices. They were obliged to depart when the eucharist was celebrated*. In reality there was a prayer for

* There were two degrees of this *less excommunication*; the one excluding them only from the *eucharist*, but allowing them to pray with the *faithful*; and the other excluding them from the prayers of the faithful, and only allowing them to pray with the Catechumens; but neither of them expelling delinquents totally from the communion of the church.—Bingham, Book XVI. Chap. II.

them, after which they departed. There are, however, two things in our practice agreeable to ancient discipline.

1. Every man, who is suspended from the sacrament, is disqualified for performing any office in the church. He cannot present his child for baptism—nor be a sponsor—nor be married, unless it be for the sake of concealing the effects of his incontinence by marriage.

2. Any man, who is suspended in his own parish, is likewise so in all other churches. It is true, there is a great inconvenience * in this neighbourhood, where they admit every body to the communion. These two things are the remains of ancient discipline. This is evident, because formerly they notified the suspension to the neighbouring churches, and when the sinner had made satisfaction, the bishop gave him a certificate as if he had done penance. This article was regulated in the council of NICE, *Canon V.* The bishop of Rome himself had not the power of taking off an excommunication inflicted by another bishop, as appears from the example of MARCION; which is a proof that he had not the authority, which he now arrogates.

* This inconvenience was wisely prevented in the *ancient church* with respect to excommunicated persons; for in those times no strangers were to be received to communion, till they shewed their letters of recommendation. And the same was made part of our English constitution in the council of London, in the year 1126.—Burn, Vol. II. p. 202.

SECT.

S E C T. V.

Of PUBLIC PENANCES.

IT remains for me to speak to you of Public Penances. This is the best part of our discipline, and the most conformable to primitive order. We ought to bless God that they are established amongst us. There are two things to be considered on this subject. 1. Who they are that should do these Penances. 2. The manner of doing them.

1. We inflict them, 1. On whoremongers and adulterers. 2. On murderers. On this point you should remark, that, notwithstanding the grace and pardon of the sovereign, we always make them do Penance publicly. There are instances of some ministers neglecting this through timidity—but there are others who have maintained that order.

3. We inflict these Penances on apostates. These are the three capital cases, which in the primitive discipline subjected sinners to Public Penance.

4. We subject thieves to it; not those who have been exposed by public judgment, for that is a kind of Penance; we only make them ask pardon in the consistory: but those who have received the sovereign's pardon; it is proper they should do Penance.

5. We inflict it on such as are guilty of sacrilege, or have recourse to magical ceremonies, such as putting money into a mill to find out a thief, &c.

6. On such as have attended *mass*, or have had their marriage solemnized by Romish priests. There are likewise some other cases—such as enormous blasphemies, &c.

II. With respect to the manner of inflicting Penance. 1. You should never constrain sinners to public Penance; because if they are not disposed to it of themselves, you only make them all the hypocrite, and they consider that Penance as a punishment, whereas it is a favour they are allowed it. So true is this, that amongst the first Christians penitents laid themselves prostrate to implore it as a favour, that they might be received to the peace of the church; and their Penances were very long; if they were shortened, that was on account of the martyrs, as we have seen.

2. It is not proper to receive sinners to the peace of the church too hastily. There was, perhaps, in the primitive church rather too great rigour in this point; but we are in these days fallen into the opposite fault. One evil amongst us is, that we make no difference betwixt crimes; for example, we treat whoremongers and adulterers just alike.

3. This Penance cannot be done, except on a Sunday morning after the sermon in presence of the whole church. It is proper this should be done in the place where the offender is a parishioner,

rishioner, except he had been settled elsewhere for a long time. In that case he should make reparation in the place, where the crime was committed.

4. In a public Penance there are three acts.

First, The censure, which is pronounced in the presence of all the people.

Secondly, The confession or Penance of the offender: He must ask pardon in a loud voice before the whole church.

Lastly, The absolution. The pastor declares to him, that, if his repentance be sincere, his sins are forgiven him.

S E C T. VI.

The PRACTICE of our CONSISTORIES in the different Cases that occur.

Of QUARRELS.

I SHALL now inform you what are the proper methods of proceeding in the consistory, according to the various cases that occur. I shall begin with *Quarrels*, which is the most common and the most difficult case to be well managed. I shall first repeat one thing, which I have already observed, and that is, that offenders should not be cited into the consistories for secret things, nor for every kind of disputes; but only for such as have made a great noise, and are attended

with particular circumstances. If there be any want of information, the parties are exhorted to give it briefly and respectfully. There are two rules that should be observed with respect to *Quarrels* *.

I. You should make the parties be reconciled to each other. For this end, you should first enquire what dispositions they are in. If they are well disposed, you should confirm them in those sentiments. If their mind is full of malice, you should endeavour to reclaim them. This is attended with some difficulty, especially when we are concerned with the sex. In order to make a good peace betwixt the parties you should be animated with justice, and lay the blame where it is due. Without this you will never establish a thorough, sincere reconciliation; and with it, you will gain the heart of the offenders, and engage them to mutual forgiveness.

But you should be attentive to one thing, and that is—to consider whether the parties are equal in condition, or not; whether, for instance, it is a father with a son, a superior with an inferior. In that case you should always keep the inferior in *awe*, and incline to the side of the superior, provided that may be done without a violation of justice. When you have thus endeavoured to bring them to a reconciliation, either they are well-disposed, or they are not.

* Might not some of the maxims advanced in this section be adopted to great advantage by our clergy, in their private endeavours to reconcile any of their parishioners, who have had a quarrel with their neighbours?

If they are disposed to be reconciled, you should express to them your joy, exhort them to give some marks of the sincerity of their sentiments, and remind them that God is witness to what passes within their heart, and therefore their forgiveness should be sincere.

Here you should remark, that you cannot reclaim the violent passions all at once, nor remove at first the whole leaven of enmity. When, therefore, you observe people endeavouring to overcome their passions, you should be satisfied; but when you still discover malice in them, you should exhort such persons not to communicate: you should neither be too easy, nor too rigid on this point. If both the parties are unwilling to be reconciled, we suspend them both. If only one party be so, we suspend that, and not the other*. But, when one of the parties is absent, we exhort the party present not to communicate till the last Sunday of the communion, in order that the other party may appear. But, if the other party does not yet appear, then the party present, if ready to be reconciled to the other, is allowed to communicate.

II. You should endeavour to reconcile the offenders to God. You should therefore in your censures represent to them the evil and the sins they commit by their disputes, and observe to them that quarrels are attended with passion, oaths, scandals, &c. You may censure them

* The wisdom of our church has prescribed the same rules for the conduct of her ministers.—See *Rubric before the Communion*.

for the circumstances that attended their Quarrels. When you have any thing to say to one of the parties, that does not relate to their reconciliation, you should make the other retire, and speak to each of them apart, that you may not renew their animosity. This should be particularly observed, when there is an inequality and subordination in the parties. For example, it would not be right to censure the father for his faults, in the presence of his son. —Further, another case about Quarrels is this: It is asked, —*Whether we may cite into the consistory such persons as are at law about their Quarrels.* —When their disputes are only common ones, we may not; but when their Quarrels have been open and scandalous, we cause them to be cited. It sometimes happens that the Parties are reconciled at law; in that case, the church does not interfere, except the scandal was very great; as, for instance, when the parties *fought* with each other on the Sunday; then what passes before the magistrate, does not prevent the church from acting her part.

LECTURE XI.

S E C T. I.

Of the CASE of LEWDNESS.

ANOTHER case, that very often occurs in our consistories, is that of *Fornication*.

The proper method of proceeding with respect to this crime, which employs us as much, if not more than any other, is this :

I. When you learn from a public and certain report, that a woman is with child, you should order her to appear before the consistory. You must exhort her to take the necessary steps for preserving her honour by marriage. You should not cite her in order to discover the father of the child she bears, and you ought not to press her upon that point, as some do. You should only admonish her to speak the truth at the proper time.

II. If a woman comes to declare herself with child by a man, we order him to appear, and we exhort him to make reparation for his fault by marriage. If he confesses his fault, and espouses the woman, we censure them on solemnizing

solemnizing the marriage, provided the woman's pregnancy is known. But, if it does not appear, and the child comes too soon, we censure the father when he presents the child for baptism.

When the child comes six months after marriage, we do not censure; but we do, if it comes sooner.

III. When the man and woman both confess to have had commerce together, we suspend them both.

IV. It is not usually the woman that denies, because her pregnancy prevents her. When the man will not confess, we do not suspend him absolutely, but we leave him to his own conscience, and exhort him not to communicate, if he is conscious of being guilty. With respect to the woman, we prohibit her the sacrament. It should be observed, that the men almost always deny, and therefore we must not *rely much* upon their oaths.

Here the evasions of lewd people are usually such as these: they use mental reservations, they think to exculpate themselves by saying the woman has had commerce with other men, and, therefore, that they are not the fathers of the child. But that is not the point in question; they should be made to understand that they are guilty, if they had concerns with the person that accuses them at the time in question.

V. When a woman has been delivered, and has sworn the child to any man, he, whom she accuses,

accuses, is reputed the father of the child. Unless he has reasons of the strongest evidence to oppose, such as an *alibi*, or can clear himself by our laws, he must take the child and do public penance. Though many things might be said about our laws in this point, it is nevertheless proper to follow the established custom.

Here it is asked,—*What must an innocent person do?*—He must submit, and take his lot patiently. But you will say, *he will be suspended*. I own that he will be so in the sight of men—but not in the sight of God. There is in this some inconvenience, but there would be a much greater—if we should acquit a man upon his protestations. In matters of law, we always, you know, meet with some inconvenience; but we must choose that plan which is attended with the fewest.

VI. Fornication, when proved, obliges to public penance, as you cannot but know.

VII. There sometimes occurs a case that is very embarrassing. A woman comes before the consistory to declare herself with child, and yet it is afterwards found that she is not so. It sometimes happens that they do this to oblige those, whom they accuse, to espouse them. In this case our practice is this: We oblige the woman to do public penance, because her crime is certain from her own confession; and, whatever happens, she has given very great scandal. If the man confesses, he likewise does public penance; but, if he denies it, we leave him to the judgment of his own conscience.

VIII.

VIII. It is asked,—*What must be done when a person comes to confess to a pastor in private, that he has fallen into that crime?*—When the crime is not known, nor at all likely to be so, we order the persons to come privately, and enjoin some penance; such as abstaining three or four times from the communion. We make them come from time to time, to examine whether they are truly penitent. When we find them well-disposed, we make them kneel down and implore pardon from God, as if it were in public; we make them give some proofs of their repentance, such as bringing up the child, if there be any.

S E C T. II.

Of profane and false SWEARERS.

WE cite *Swearers* into the consistory, and proceed against them, as the case requires. If their oaths have nothing very bad, we content ourselves with censuring them. But if their oaths are atrocious—by the name of God, &c. we *bring them on their knees*. In the case of very enormous blasphemies we proceed doubly against the criminal. The magistrate inflicts a punishment on him, and he is obliged to do public penance. If the blasphemy is not public, we make the criminal kiss the ground in the consistory. He is likewise obliged to

to be on his knees, whilst we are pronouncing the censure upon him, and we suspend him for once or twice from the sacrament; and when the term of his penance is expired, he applies to a pastor to admit him to the communion.

It should be observed, whether there be not some *perjury* in the oaths. For instance, there are some who swear that they did not see such a person, &c. In that case, it is proper, after having censured them, to absolve their conscience. We rank imprecations among these oaths,—we proceed against those who use them, accordingly as they are more or less atrocious—more or less public; and sometimes we bring them on their knees.

S E C T. III.

Of SABBATH-BREAKERS.

WE also cite into the consistory those who profane *the Sabbath*. Such are they who travel—or traffick without necessity, or get drunk—make parties of pleasure—game during the time of service, or dance upon that day, &c. With respect to these last, we *bring them on their knees*.

S E C T.

S E C T. IV.

Of NEGLIGENT PARENTS *and* DISOBEDIENT CHILDREN.

FATHERS and mothers, who neglect the instruction of their children, are likewise cited into the consistory, and are censured: If they relapse, they are suspended. The same is done with respect to disobedient and rebellious children.

S E C T. V.

Of DRUNKARDS *and* DEBAUCHEES.

WE proceed also against *Drunkards, Debauchees, and such as make noisy, scandalous riots in the night.* Drunkenness very often produces a complication of crimes. It is usually mixed with oaths and quarrels. We should here be careful to proportion the satisfaction and censure to these different circumstances. As drunkenness fixes a brand of infamy upon women, it is not proper to cite them except in the last extremity; it is better to admonish them privately.

I say nothing to you about slanderers and covetous persons; because we rarely cite them into the consistory; which is a defect in our discipline.

S E C T.

S E C T. VI.

Of MARRIAGE.

I SHALL speak a few words on Marriage, and shew you what depends on the church, in matrimonial cases.

If we learn that a man has promised Marriage to a woman, we cite them into the consistory, and exhort them to fulfil their promises. If they are willing of themselves to separate, and the authority of the fathers and mothers intervenes, and there have been no solemn and public engagements, such as espousals, &c. the consistory may release them, by passing, however, a censure upon them, or inflicting some punishment for having so rashly engaged themselves. But, when the name of God has intervened, we must not proceed lightly, nor disengage the parties without some great reasons.

When the espousals have been made, and one of the parties desires to proceed further, and does not consent to a breach of promise, we send them to the *matrimonial* court, with a letter which we grant to the acting party. In this letter, which we address to the person who presides in the *matrimonial* court, we send him information of what has passed between the parties, and refer them to his tribunal.

With respect to the solemnization of Marriages, it must be remarked,

Q

I.

1. That we do not publish the banns of people who are suspended from the sacrament, at least, when it is for considerable crimes; for when a man is prohibited only for a quarrel, we may proceed.

2. We do not publish the banns of widows, unless seven months have expired since the death of their husbands.

3. We do not in this country publish the banns of cousin-germans *.

4. The place where we publish the banns is that of the birth and residence of the parties; and we cannot solemnize a marriage without a certificate of the banns having been published, in the places where they ought.

When any opposition is made to the publishing of the banns, he who makes it goes to the pastor of the place, or the prince's officer,

* The marriage of cousin-germans was forbid by no law ecclesiastical or civil, before the time of *Theodosius*, who by an express law absolutely forbid it; but it was allowed again in the next reign, and under *Justinian*, who fixed the allowance in the body of his laws.—See Bingham's *Antiquities*, Book XVI. Chap. XI. § 4. and Book XXII. Chap. II. § 3.

Mr. *Johnson* asserts, that cousin-germans are not forbid to marry, by any law of God or men, except the *Pope's* canon law, which is not now in force, as to this particular.—See *Statute 32 Hen. VIII. c. 39. Vade Mecum*, Vol. I. Chap. XXI. and *Burn*, Vol. II. page 391.

It is true, that many excellent persons, both of former ages and the present, have entertained great scruples on this point;—and surely no Christian should act against the approbation of his own conscience. Some, again, have entertained a strange notion, that “*second cousins may not marry, though first cousins may.*” But this, (as Mr. *Wheatley* observes) “*is only a vulgar mistake;—it plainly appearing, that no cousins whatsoever, whether in the first, second, or third descent, are prohibited marriage, either by the laws of God, or of the land.*”

and

and gives caution for the damage that may happen by retarding the marriage. If he applies to the pastor, our practice is, that he should take some *constable* of the place, and the man, that forbids the banns, should *shake hands with the minister*, by way of giving caution. Marriages are solemnized only in those places where the persons reside, or where they were born, or were parishioners.

SECTION VII.

*Of the Manner of observing the LAWS of
DISCIPLINE.*

WE have seen what were the Laws of Discipline, I must now shew you how they ought to be observed. I shall offer you, on this head, three general rules, which you may apply to particular cases. These rules are zeal, prudence, and charity.

I. The Laws of Discipline should be executed with zeal. This requires two things; the first of which regards the acts of Discipline, the second the persons on whom it is exercised.

1. With respect to the acts, it is proper to exercise Discipline in all its rigour, when the case requires it. We should not study mitigation against the laws. We should act, in these cases, like people that have no fear: Timidity

midity and complaisance should never check you. They, who have respect to persons, do the work of the Lord negligently. It is the fear of losing their authority, that often prevents ministers from discharging their duty; but God frequently suffers them to fall into the very inconvenience they wish to avoid; for it happens, that those, whom they favour, imagine they are afraid of them, and therefore grow the more insolent.

2. This zeal must appear with respect to persons. A pastor should exercise Discipline against all sorts of persons without distinction, because every body is subject to it—the high—the low—magistrates—the poor—the rich—relations, friends, &c. Pastors should have no respect to the appearance of persons, else they would destroy all the fruit of their ministry: For if a minister spare the great, or his own relations, how should he be able to edify others? Those whom we favour are either persons of rank, or of low extraction. If the former perceive that we dare not proceed against them with rigour, they will trample under foot the authority of ministers. If the latter find that they need only resist, in order to be exempt, they will despise both pastors and Discipline. We should, therefore, on these occasions fear God only, and act without the fear of men*. Besides, when a pastor ap-

* In cases of importance, all ministers should exert a spirit of zeal and fortitude, as well as discretion, ever remembering those words of Solomon,—*The fear of man bringeth a snare*; and that just reflection of a celebrated heathen poet, *Degenere animos timor argui*.

appears partial, we put no confidence in him, which is a great evil for a person in public office.

To avoid this inconvenience, you must be on your guard against avarice, and never receive presents from people who have any affair before the consistory. I must apprise you of this, because, thro' the whole country almost, they bribe ministers by presents, and especially in our mountains. You should, therefore, always remember, that the authority of ministers cannot be preserved, but when it is free from all partiality.

By this, however, I do not mean, that you may not pay regard to the quality, or condition of persons. If, for instance, I had to speak to a man of some distinguished employment, and should treat him like a peasant, I should do wrong. It would be proper to assure him, that we are obliged to cite a person of so considerable a rank, &c.

What, therefore, you ought to attend to is this, that those regards should affect only the manner of exercising Discipline; in that you may vary, but with respect to the essentials of Discipline, you should relax nothing; as if a man of quality has deserved suspension, or ought to be brought on his knees: this is what ST. AMBROSE practised with respect to the emperor THEODOSIUS*.

II.

* The spirit and authority exerted by St. Ambrose, in rejecting the emperor Theodosius from the sacrament, has met with the highest commendations from various writers. The story be-

II. Zeal is not sufficient—it must be regulated by prudence: I shall reduce this to the following maxims:

1. You must act dispassionately. It is necessary for those who preside to know how to govern themselves. We are frequently concerned with people that are absurd, unjust, passionate, &c. We should never be able to succeed with such people without keeping our temper:----We should never put ourselves into a passion.

2. You must never allow yourselves to anticipate, or to judge thro' favour, or prejudice;

ing worth the reader's notice, I shall therefore give it him in a few words.—There being a sedition among the people of *Theſſalonica*, the emperor ordered the guard to fall on them in heat, who, in that hurry and confusion, destroyed several thousands of these poor wretches. Soon after which, he, coming to *Milan*, was going to offer himself at ST. AMBROSE's church to receive the communion. But the good bishop (when he heard of it) met him courageously at the church doors, and obliged him to return, and first repent himself of his crime. “With what eyes
“ (saith he) can you behold the temple of him who is Lord
“ of all?—With what feet can you tread this holy place?—
“ How can you put out those hands, to receive the blessed elements, which are yet reeking with innocent blood?—How can
“ you take the precious blood into that mouth, which gave out
“ such barbarous and bloody orders? Depart, therefore, and
“ take heed, that you do not increase your first crime by a second: Submit yourself to the bond which the Lord of the
“ world has been pleased to bind you with, which is only medicinal, and intended to work your cure.”—This repulse the emperor acquiesced in, and offered himself no more to those holy rites, till he had in tears repented of the sad effects of his hasty anger.—I have chosen (says Mr. Wheatley, from whom this account is transcribed) to give this instance, because it is what the Church of ENGLAND has thought fit to record in her Homilies—and to mention with marks of approbation and applause.—See Wheatley on the Common Prayer, Chap. VI. Sect. I.

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that would tempt you to take some false steps. Here is one thing that you ought to be on your guard against--and that is--against informations. A man comes to make his complaints to you; if you are not upon your guard, you will suffer yourselves to be prejudiced by the first information.---You will speak your mind---give your word---and after that you will not know how to draw back, and that will do mischief. You should therefore hear both parties. I have two rules to give you on this point. Prejudices may be favourable or unfavourable. They are favourable, when a man passes for a good man. They are, on the contrary, disadvantageous, when the informer, or the person informed against, is a bad man. You should not suffer yourselves to be prejudiced by this. An honest man may be wrong in the affair in question, and a man, who is in other respects a rascal, may have justice on his side.

3. You must not suffer yourselves to be led away by passion. There are two sorts of passions which you must guard against. Unjust passions, and such as are in some sense just and lawful: You should avoid them both. You should avoid unjust passions, as anger, and such as arise from hatred, interest, &c. There are others who seem to flow from a good principle. For example, you are informed, that a sinner has committed some gross and scandalous offence, you are seized with indignation, and suffer yourselves to be enraged at it. But

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you should never act in those circumstances.--- You should let those first emotions subside, and recover your temper.

4. The fourth, and principal maxim of prudence is---to examine---and unravel well the fact in question, in order to know what ought to be done. For example, you should not treat all folks alike: One method of proceeding is proper in the first offence, and another in a relapse: We are not so severe in the first case, as in the second. It is the same as to the persons we are concerned with; we should distinguish between an honest and a bad man. We should not treat an honest man, who has hitherto discharged his duty, as we would a man that is rebellious, disorderly, &c. We should treat the first with gentleness, express our regard and compassion for him, and, above all, our hope that he will retrieve himself. With respect to such as are void of all piety, we should observe to them, that we are shocked at their behaviour, and think them in a very bad state, &c.

Moreover, it is proper to have regard to the disposition of sinners—to their temper, &c. There are some high-spirited people that know not how to submit; others are mild and tractable. You should know how to speak to them both, according to their condition. You should, therefore, before you censure offenders, endeavour to discover what temper they appear in before you. If they are confused—repentant—and tractable, you will have no occasion for any great exertions. If they are high-spirited, impenitent,

impenitent, and insolent, you should speak to them with firmness, but never with passion; oblige them to listen to you, and, as soon as they are attentive, speak to them more firmly; and, if you can manage to awe them, you should then proceed to reproaches. If they fall into a passion, let them alone to another time, perhaps their passion will not then be so violent: You should never push people too far. There are many with whom we can do no great matters: We must deal with them as we do with bad paymasters, of whom we get what we can. We cannot make a man recover from a violent passion all at once; but we must reclaim them gently, and by degrees.

III. You should exercise Discipline with mildness and love *. Mildness is absolutely necessary: At the very time you are proceeding against offenders with the utmost rigour, you should make them sensible that you love them, and that it is with concern you find yourselves obliged to exercise the rigour of Discipline against them. For this end, you must really have an affection and tenderness for them; and

* These rules, concerning mildness and love in the exercise of Discipline, I would earnestly recommend to the *peculiar* attention of those clergymen who are to be invested with the office of civil magistrates,—or with any office of considerable authority in our ecclesiastical courts. By indulging excessive severity, or intemperate passion, they would bring disgrace on their office and religion,—and might bring on themselves some temporal inconveniencies, attended with *much cost and sorrow*: of which I could produce some striking—unhappy instances. But I remember—“and would avoid—the character of those who *speak* “*evil of dignities.*”

you must observe here, that you should never seem to be enraged against them; that would produce many bad effects. Many people call that conduct zeal, but they very often deceive themselves, and it is only the effect of their passion.

You should remember what ST. JAMES says, iii. 14. *If ye have bitter envying, and strife in your hearts, glory not.* Hatred and passion expose to contempt. If this is the case with private persons, how much more must ministers be exposed to it? Besides, if a minister puts himself in a passion, we lose the respect that is due to him. A man, who sees his pastor in a rage, will think that he has a right to be so too. After that, the censures we pass will not in this case affect, but very often irritate the offenders. If censures appear severe, even when they are tempered with mildness,—how much more when they are pronounced with ill-nature and passion.

Mildness is further necessary when you wish to establish any thing of importance, and are aware you shall meet with some opposition. We should never wish to carry things with a high hand, and at any rate whatever; otherwise those we are concerned with will *use* some *secret* art—and set themselves in direct opposition to us. How often have good regulations in societies been observed to miscarry, merely because they were not proposed with mildness, and a wrong method was taken.

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It is this want of mildness, which occasions the complaint that ministers are of a severe temper, fond of dominion, stiff, and untractable. This is but too true; and it is, perhaps, the greatest source of that envy and jealousy, which people have against them. You should, therefore, be on your guard against this temptation; always remember, that you should be firm, and relax nothing in point of order—but should ever act with mildness.

When you have not mildness, either you will succeed, or you will not. If you do succeed, you will not gain over the consciences of people; you will oblige them to be on their guard against another occasion, you will inspire them with *fear* instead of *love*, and drive them upon new oppositions. If you should not succeed, you will be sadly mortified, and lose your credit. You should particularly avoid contending stiffly for things, that are not worth the trouble of it. It is only on particular occasions, that you should shew resolution, and give a loose to your indignation. JESUS CHRIST, who was mildness itself, spoke on some occasions with great force. ST. PAUL did the same in his Epistle to the *Galatians*; but this should be reserved for very important cases; as when you are concerned with incorrigible people. You should, above all, be careful, that there is never any thing which relates to yourselves, and your own interest. When you take fire for trifles, observe what will be the consequence: You will be led to push things too far—you will

will proceed to rigorous methods ; and, by proceeding thus, in things of little importance, you will do a great deal of harm.

That you may be able to avoid this want of mildness and charity (which I consider as a capital point) I must beg your attention to the cause from whence it proceeds.

1. I find it arises from the kind of life which ministers lead. They live retired, which sours their temper, and puts them in danger of becoming opiniative and intractable.

2. It arises from the want of *knowing the world*: I mean not by this what is generally meant, but a *knowledge of the world*, particularly adapted to ministers. They assume a certain air of sufficiency, are wanting in condescension, and are bigotted to their own *opinions*. In this it is that they do not know the world.

3. This arises often from prejudice. They think to maintain the glory of God, when they know how to mix it with other things, and are interested in their own private concerns: but when we maintain the glory of God, we may do it without asperity. This appears from the example of JESUS CHRIST, whose life you should make your serious study. Observe his condescension, and that of the apostles, with respect to persons who entertained sentiments opposite to the Gospel. It is that morose and stiff temper which produces that attachment to their own sentiments, and those disputes that prevail amongst ecclesiastics.

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The precepts which I have hitherto given you are not sufficient to form you to the exercise of Discipline. You must add to them experience; *that* will give what precepts cannot give. There are two kinds of experience—the one of practice, the other of reading and example. The former is that of persons who exercise the sacred ministry.

A long practice affords experience; but, if you have no rules, it requires too much time, and hence it is that you may not understand your business, till you are near the end of your days.

With respect to the experience of reading and example, as you are not in the ministry, you should labour to acquire it from reading ecclesiastical history, and conversing with persons who exercise Discipline.

LECTURE XII.

S E C T. I.

Of PRIVATE DISCIPLINE.

AFTER having spoken to you of *Public* Discipline, I must now speak to you of *Private* Discipline *. On this subject it will be proper to observe,

I. That the care I am now speaking of regards the minister only. It is not so with *Public* Discipline, in which the consistories, that are united with the pastor, bear a part of

* The subject of private Discipline discussed in this, and the subsequent lectures, is, I humbly conceive, of the highest importance, and treated in a very judicious and masterly manner. I must, therefore, beg leave to recommend with peculiar earnestness this last, and most excellent part of our author's work, to the attention of our young parochial clergy.—I would intreat them to give it not a single, cursory perusal,—but a frequent—serious—unprejudiced examination, till they shall have thoroughly digested it in their heads—imprinted it deeply on their hearts and memories, and at length adopted it in their private conduct, amongst the people committed to their charge. By these means, I persuade myself, they will prove an honour to their sacred profession—a peculiar comfort to their respective parishes—and a blessing to our church and nation at large.

the burden. When the business is to give private admonitions—to visit the sick, &c. this regards the pastor alone.

II. You should observe, that the functions of this kind of Discipline are more numerous than those of general Discipline. Consistories are only assembled now and then; every case is not brought before them. But there is no time, no day, in which a minister is not obliged to attend to some function of this Discipline.

III. This care is the most important of all, and may supply the defect of public Discipline*. From these general reflections we may draw this inference, *that the ministry is a real charge, and demands the whole man.* Preaching, indeed, demands much pains. But after having preached, it is requisite to proceed to Discipline. Neither is this all, we must take care of our own flock in private, which is the most laborious, and most considerable office.

* Ought not this single reflection to weigh much with every serious clergyman of our established church, and make him zealous to supply, as much as possible, by his private labours, the unhappy defect of public Discipline; a defect, not indeed peculiar to ourselves, but which our church herself freely acknowledges (*in the Preface to the Communion-Service*)—which all wise and good men sincerely lament; and which, alas! all attempts to remedy have hitherto been, and, I fear, ever will be, in vain, whilst so many religious parties and divisions, with such a general profligacy of principle and manners, continue to prevail amongst us.—The prevalence of this last evil has been very severely and justly complained of, by our spiritual governors, in a very seasonable Address from the House of Convocation to his MAJESTY.—May the exertion of their wisdom and zeal be prosperous in the extenuation of that evil, tho' we may not hope for the entire extirpation of it.

IV.

IV. If we are in want of instructions about public Discipline, we are still more so with respect to some other functions. Ministers are extremely remiss. There are laws which oblige them to preach, and to perform some acts of Discipline; but there are no laws which oblige them to the other duties of their office. There are, in reality, some duties which cannot be dispensed with, such as visiting the sick; but there are others, which the generality of ministers do not discharge, such as private admonitions, &c.

Now, to enter on the subject, I shall reduce what I have to say on Private Discipline, to two heads: 1. The care which regards the church in general. 2. That which regards certain persons in particular.

S E C T. II.

Of the CARE which regards the CHURCH in general.

THE Care which regards the Church in general consists in these four things:

1. In a pastor's knowing the state of his flock.
2. In his procuring good establishments.
3. In his knowing life, and conversing with the people of his church.
4. In his knowing how to preserve his authority and credit.

S E C T.

S E C T. III.

Of the KNOWLEDGE of his FLOCK.

I SHALL begin this article by shewing you the necessity of it. We shall then consider, what are the means that may be employed for acquiring this Knowledge, and, lastly, the use that may be made of it.

I. It is necessary a pastor should know the state of his church; because, without that he would not be able to edify it. This is a point which the generality of Ministers do not attend to. It would be highly proper to represent to themselves the account which they will have to give of their flock to God. Alas! how shall any man be able to give an account of a thing which he has neither known, nor examined into?—When a pastor has exhorted men to perform their duty, he should observe, whether they profit from it. It is not sufficient to point out the road, but he should see whether they walk in it.

It is proper to know both the good and the evil there is in his Flock.

The good—that he may praise God for it—take comfort and encouragement to himself, and redouble his pains.

He should know disorders in order to remedy them—he should know the prevailing sins, and

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who they are that lead a scandalous life; what families give way to it, and from what authors the evil originates; that he may labour, in public, and in private, to stop the progress of these disorders. The best study he can pursue is, 1st, To study himself; and 2dly, to study others;—those of his own flock. This would be better than the study of many other things.—See what GAUSSEN says on this point, page 357.

II. Having made these remarks, let us now consider the means that may be employed for acquiring this Knowledge. A Pastor may know his flock, either by others, or by himself.

I say first by others. Many persons may be able to give us information; but there is one thing from which a pastor may derive great advantages, and that is from the service of elders. The principal use he can draw from their establishment is this, that he may place them in different quarters. It is therefore of importance to establish good elders, and to gain their confidence *. He may make use of such persons as are both good and prudent; he may de-

* It were much to be wished, that the minister of every parish were happy enough to procure at least one good churchwarden, from whose assistance he might derive many advantages, similar to those which our author here attributes to the establishment of good elders. As in most of our parishes the minister has a right of choosing one churchwarden, he should endeavour to fix on one, whose circumstances, temper, and religious conduct, are respectable throughout his parish;—and I can venture to assure him, that he will find such a choice attended with great satisfaction to himself and benefit to his people, if he is careful and zealous to make the best use of it.

fire them to inform themselves of such, or such a thing, and then to acquaint him with it. There is a precaution that should be observed with respect to both, which is this, that he should act with prudence and discretion, and employ people of judgment; for otherwise he may do things in such a manner as to give disgust to private persons, and oblige them to be on their guard against their pastors, and to consider them as spies.

Secondly, He may acquire this Knowledge by himself; and this is always the surest and the best. When a minister is informed of any thing by another, he should endeavour to know it by himself.

For this purpose, these rules should be observed:

First Rule. A minister should profit from all he sees and hears, and make reflections upon it. There are some disorders which are always publicly talked of—such as riot, luxury, &c.

Few scandalous vices escape a vigilant pastor. But, besides this, there are many occasions from which he may learn the genius and character of those with whom he is concerned. When he converses with them, he observes what is their genius from the sentiments they discover. In speaking of the application of a sermon, I said, that it was proper to make frequent reflections on mankind: That is very necessary here, and I must refer you to what I then said, that you may pay attention to it.

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Second Rule. A minister should seek for occasions of seeing and knowing his parishioners, especially those whom he has an opportunity of seeing but very seldom; such as those who live at a distance, &c. There are some people whom he would never be acquainted with, if he did not make it his business to find them out. There is one thing here that would be, I apprehend, extremely useful, and that is, that every Pastor should have a list of the people that compose his Flock, and should lay himself under an obligation of knowing them, and mark down on the margin, what relates to them; he should visit every family at least once a year, or once in two years, if his flock is much dispersed. This is a thing which is not thought of, and is considered by some as time lost—yet nothing is more useful; it was practised formerly at *Geneva* and *here*; but is fallen * into disuse, and it would be a good thing to revive the custom.

III. Let us now consider the use that may be made of this Knowledge—either with re-

* The clergy of our established church have been most severely censured as far more negligent on this point, than any other Protestant Ministers, either at home or abroad. How unjustly, we may sufficiently judge from our author's remarks, in this and other parts of his works, on the negligence of the ministers in *Switzerland* and *Geneva*. I say not this to encourage, or justify any of our clergy in the neglect of that important duty, the visiting, instructing, and admonishing their parishioners in private; I only wish to vindicate the generality of them from the too indiscriminate, and exaggerated censures of some persons, who seem fond of representing them in a much worse light, than, I hope, (with all their faults) they deserve.

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spect to the Flock in general—or to particular persons. It is proper for a minister to know the good—the disorderly—those who profit from his admonitions—the prevailing vices, &c. But this is not all, after this he should act agreeably to the Knowledge he has of the state of things. If there are any irregularities in his church, he should remove them. If there are any particular persons who go wrong, he should reclaim them. If there are any good people, he should encourage and confirm them.

You see, therefore, that this use regards the measures that should be taken for the edification of the church in general, and of individuals in particular. As to the first point, he is better able to edify his church, 1. By his sermons; when he is acquainted with his Flock, he may take such texts as are best adapted to their necessities. 2. By the exercise of discipline; he may remedy disorders the better, when he is informed of them.

With respect to particular persons, he may give them more salutary advice either in health or in sickness, or in any other conditions, in which he may happen to find them.

I am amazed how ministers can make themselves easy, without examining into the state of their Flocks. Here ignorance produces security.

Observe, above all, that one of the most important offices of the ministry, is visiting the sick. Now it is impossible to discharge that well, if a minister does not know the per-

sons he is to address. How should he speak to them properly without that? He will do this much better, if he gains this Knowledge in good time. Some may, perhaps, suppose this a great deal of trouble, but I find that it shortens our labour. We can much sooner succeed with a person we know, than with one that is a stranger to us.

Lastly, I should wish, as the memory is treacherous, that every pastor had a memorandum-book *, in which he might note down what he should observe about his church in general, and about every individual: But such memorandum-books should not be seen by any other person. For example, he might remark whether there be in his church any obduracy and libertinism, or any attention to sermons—whether the scandals which had been censured are decreased—whether a man who had promised to reform has done it. By these means he might know his Flock thoroughly, and see his proficiency: This would give him infinite consolation when he finds people, that were a few years before devoted to the world, are no longer so. If the word is not fruitful, he will discover from whence that proceeds, and endeavour to provide a remedy, and by these means he will acquit his conscience.

* This method is strongly recommended, with similar precepts and cautions, by Dr. STEARNE, in an excellent *Latin Treatise on visiting the Sick*, first published in the last century, but reprinted in London about 12 years ago.

S E C T. IV.

Of the CONDUCT of a PASTOR towards his FLOCK.

WHEN a Pastor knows his Church, he should consider in what manner he ought to conduct himself towards the people that compose it. On this subject, we may make some *general* reflections and some *particular ones*.

I. It is of the utmost importance to know how to conduct himself well; that will contribute more, than is usually thought, to the progress of the gospel. Good conduct is necessary for success in men of the world. It is still more necessary in ministers to know life, as they have concerns with all sorts of persons, and there is need, as it were, of as many different methods of acting, as there are persons. You must here remark, that, by knowing life I do not mean the knowing how to observe certain ceremonies and decorums, as people of the world do; they are not adapted to a pastor, and are, for the most part, repugnant to piety and sincerity. He should, therefore, avoid them, and display great simplicity in his behaviour.

He should take care in what manner he behaves towards every one. Prudence requires this, and *that* prudence is not in the least opposite

posite to piety. He should imitate ST. PAUL, who *made himself all things to all men*. I shall therefore run over the different orders of persons that compose a church, and shew how a minister should conduct himself towards each of them.

In the first place, I take it for granted, that a Pastor ought to have some intercourse with his Flock. He ought to have it on two occasions.

1. When it is requisite for him to perform some function of his ministry---such as giving admonitions---visiting the sick, &c.

2. It is further necessary he should have some intercourse---though, indeed, it should be neither too familiar---nor too frequent. He should not be too open. When he visits people rather seldom, they will only have the more respect for him.

They who are grave, and rather retired, are always the most esteemed. He should particularly avoid such people as are vitious, and of dubious characters---I say the same of *worldly meetings*—and the company of the sex. He should not, however, carry things to the other extreme, and visit nobody; by those means he would put it out of his power to do good offices to people.—Hence it was that ERASMUS observed—*that they who are taken from deserts are not fit to be Pastors*. But, whatever persons a Pastor happens to be concerned with, he should always preserve his gravity; yet that gravity should be tempered with sweetness. He should
never

never do any thing repugnant to the character of a Pastor; neither should he always speak as if he were in the pulpit. He may converse on different subjects, provided the honour of his office and piety are not injured by it*.

But, for the better understanding of this, you are to observe, that Pastors converse with men on two different occasions.

1. They converse *officially*. They should then talk only of such things as relate to their employment. When they are giving admonitions---or visiting the sick; they should do it with gravity and authority.

2. At other times they converse out of civility and by way of intercourse. They may then act differently. If a minister should be always censuring or exhorting, he would do more harm than good: but he should avoid all discourse unbecoming wise people; he should not be often running out into useless conversations---nor express too much delight in the things of the world. He should endeavour, as much as he can, to make conversation turn upon serious subjects, and such as furnish occasion for pious reflections.

II. Thus much with respect to the life of a minister in general---let us now come to some-

* The reflections of our author, in this section, on the minister's behaviour in conversation, and a judicious choice of company, are exceedingly important, both for the security of his own character and authority---and for promoting the cause of religion in the world around him. There are some excellent remarks on this interesting subject in SECKER's *Charges*, p. 255---262.

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thing more particular, and consider the maxims he should observe with every one.

First, With the principal persons of his church. He should endeavour to live well with them. This is a maxim of great importance for a minister's success. He should not, however, visit them too frequently, nor too *particularly*; especially if they are of distinguished rank.

Ministers make a bad figure in the houses of the great. Besides, this is taken ill by the common-people. When they observe Pastors so assiduous at the houses of the great, they consider them as flatterers and courtiers, and have less respect for them. Whereas when they are a little reserved, and live somewhat retired, the common people and the great have more esteem for them. Nevertheless, it is proper to visit them sometimes, and even to shew them some respect and confidence. In this part of the world but few great people live in the country; you should therefore visit the principal persons a little familiarly. You should endeavour to have a share in their confidence, yet without shewing flattery or mean complaisance. This intercourse would be attended with considerable advantage; because, when you wish to procure some good establishments, they will succeed; the common people will not oppose them; whereas, if the principal persons do not love you, they will draw all the common people after them; or, if that is not the case, there will be some trouble and division, which is not edifying.

fyng. You should therefore endeavour to gain over the principal persons without meanness.

To attain this end, there is one excellent method, and that is, to take people by means of piety, and to discourse with them on their duty. If they are good people, you will infallibly procure their esteem and confidence. If they are bad and vitious you should endeavour to inspire them with piety: for that purpose, reprove them with gentleness---but with courage; by these means you will gain them over—or at least you will make them afraid. If you are disposed to any undertaking in your church, and they ought to know it, consult them upon it; they will esteem it a compliment. You may even manage in such a manner, that they will enter of themselves into the scheme you wish.

Ministers are very often unsuccessful, merely by being too stiff. They are for doing every thing of themselves, and do not manage well the principal persons of their flock. There is one thing that should be avoided in a church—and that is, the forming of parties. The maxim of *divide & impera* is a pernicious one in religion, and the contrary should be observed.

If you find any families divided, endeavour to reunite them. Appear neuter as much as possible, or, if you do take any part, let it always be that of justice; this is a means of acquiring authority.

Secondly, With respect to elders, you should converse with them more familiarly than you do

do with any others. You should often discourse with them on the care and the necessities of the church, and ask them for some intelligence from their quarter. Discourse with them on what relates to their office; speak to them with openness of what concerns the edification of the church, and acquaint them what it is you design to do *. I should wish too that you would instruct them a little in the ancient discipline. It is right to join with them in seeking out remedies for the bad morals of Christians, and to inform them what is done in other places. By these means, you will inspire them with zeal for the exercise of discipline. This article I recommend to you very strongly.

Thirdly, With respect to particular persons.

1. A Pastor ought to visit good people more than others, to convince them that he loves them on account of their piety, to confirm them, to exhort them when they are remiss, and to reclaim them with mildness, when they fall into any fault. He should express publicly the esteem he has for good people and for piety—and bestow commendations on those who practise it.

2. With respect to the *wicked*, their number is greater, and it is more difficult to reclaim them. A minister should not converse so frequently with them †, nor shew the same marks of

* Would not the same conduct, which pastors are here advised to observe towards their *elders*, be highly proper and useful in our clergy towards their *churchwardens*, and other principal officers of their parish?

† “Familiarities with profane and vicious persons, beyond what necessary civility, or a real prospect of reforming them requires, will, whatever we may promise ourselves from their fa-

of esteem and friendship for them, as he does for good people. By this, however, I do not mean that he should desert them. I say, further, that a Pastor should do more than a private person in their behalf. A private person may totally avoid their acquaintance, but Pastors must sometimes visit the wicked, in order to reform them. In the intercourse you have with the impious and wicked, you should act *officially*, and not talk with them of indifferent things; but your conversations should be holy, grave, and useful.

3. I proceed now to another order of persons. There are some people who are not only impious, but likewise high-spirited and rebellious. There are always some of these that support the cause of impiety, and oppose all discipline. Their number is not great, but they are scabby sheep that may infect a whole flock. By them the devil establishes his kingdom. They are the people, who turn into ridicule the sermons of ministers and the maxims of the gospel; they form parties in the church, and thus oppose the advancement of God's kingdom: What must be done to reclaim these people? Charity would have us first endeavour to reclaim them by gentle methods*, but sometimes there

your or interest, always discredit, or weaken us in general; and much oftner prove hurtful, than advantageous to any of us in particular."—*Secker's Charges*, p. 37.

* To clergymen, who may be drawn into occasional disputes with infidels or deists, Bishop BURNET has recommended the following cautions: "In disputing, do not offer to answer any argument, of which you never heard before, and know nothing concerning

there is need of severity, patience, &c. There are two maxims which a pastor should observe in this case.

The *first* is, to examine from what principle the impious and profane disposition of such people proceeds. In some it springs from atheism and libertinism; he should instruct them, shew them the excellence and importance of religion, and the danger that attends the cause of impiety; he should speak to them of death, and the account they will have to give to God, &c. In others it may arise from some disgust and chagrin they have taken. As to these, they are easy to reclaim.

We must acknowledge one thing, which is, that the generality of those who suffer themselves to be thus hurried away, do it not thro' the fault of ministers. Sometimes this proceeds from a passion to which they are devoted. One, for example, shall be addicted to impurity; he will oppose every thing that is contrary to his passion. It is proper to examine from what

concerning it; that will both expose you, and the cause you maintain; and, if you feel yourselves grow too warm at any time, break off, and persist no longer in the dispute; for you may by that grow to an indecent heat, by which you may wrong the cause which you endeavour to defend. In the matter of *mysteries* be very cautious; for the simplicity, in which those sublime truths are delivered in the scriptures, ought to be well studied and adhered to: Only one part of the argument should be insisted on, I mean the shortness and defectiveness of our faculties; which, being well considered, will afford a great variety of noble speculations, that are obvious, and easily apprehended, to restrain the wanton fallies of some petulant men."——BURNET'S *History of his own Times*, Vol. IV. p. 417.

principle

principle the obstinacy of sinners proceeds, in order to reclaim them from it.

The *second* maxim, and perhaps the most useful, is this, to time well his admonitions to such people. For this end, he must lay down this principle, that there are some times when the wicked are stubborn, and will yield nothing; others, when you may by some method or other come at them. You must observe, there is nothing so weak as a bad conscience. The least thing will sometimes disturb them. Take them under pain, sickness, or any other affliction; when you have brought them to a certain point, do not leave them there. If they pay you attention, express yourselves pleased with them, and endeavour to strengthen their good dispositions.

4. There is a fourth order of sinners. These are they who are beginning to return from their errors, and are just entered upon the work of repentance. Towards these you should act with prudence. You ought to express your joy at their conversion, support and encourage them; but you must never flatter them; you should, on the contrary, make them sensible that they are not yet in the state they should be. They will sometimes pretend to be converted all of a sudden; but, you must ever remember, that conversion is effected by degrees.

Fourthly, We may consider men in different conditions of life. We are not speaking now of the sick; but Pastors ought to see persons in affliction, and visit them frequently. Visits are then

then extremely well taken, and they gain the affection of a Flock. But by these visits you are to understand such as are useful. This may shew you the importance of your behaviour towards those, who are afflicted through the death of relations, or any other cause; for God makes that affliction instrumental to the conversion of sinners.---The man, who laughs at sermons, will tremble under affliction or sickness. Then it is, that the heart is most susceptible of good impressions; then too the ministry may be more successful. You should, therefore, make the most of such opportunities, and not amuse yourselves in making vain compliments. On the contrary, you should then give some admonitions, if necessary, and lead sinners to repentance: But this should be done in private.

Fifthly, It is proper to pay attention to the different ages of life.

1. With respect to young people, ministers should sometimes talk with them, express an affection for them, and exhort them to their duty: When you meet with those whom you have instructed for the communion, you should remind them of their vow, and tell them, you are persuaded they are constantly thinking of it: We are used to tell catechumens, that they must remember our exhortations after they have been admitted. We should, therefore, assure them, likewise, that we constantly remember them, and have an eye on their conduct. Many young people become corrupt, merely because they are neglected.

2. With respect to the aged----Pastors are obliged in conscience to visit them, because they have but a short time to be in the world. Here it is that your conversations should be grave, serious, and affectionate. You should make them think on the great account they are soon to give, and that so much the more, as old people are disposed to flatter themselves, and habits are more deeply rooted in them than others.

Sixthly, With respect to the rich, and the poor---you should conduct yourselves towards each of them in the following manner :

1. You should pay some regard to the rich, and to people of quality, but without carrying that too far; because, otherwise, the common people will judge ill of you. They will attribute it either to fear or to avarice. That would ruin a Pastor in the opinion both of the poor and the rich, and would nourish the vanity so usual in great people. You should dissuade them from the vices to which their fortunes and rank incline them, and exhort them to humility, modesty, &c.

2. With respect to the poor, and those in a middle station of life, a pastor should conduct himself on the model of his master : He should, after the example of JESUS CHRIST, visit them, assist them, take care of their salvation, &c.

This is an important duty, because the poor are very numerous, and besides they are very ignorant, and greatly neglected.

Conscience will by no means allow us to put such a difference between the rich and the poor,

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as to converse often with the one, and not with the other.

From all I have been saying it appears, that the office of a Pastor is very laborious, and absolutely requires the whole man. There will never be any want of business in this employment; and that of making sermons and preaching is not the greatest.

S E C T. V.

*Of the ESTABLISHMENTS that may be made by a
PASTOR in his FLOCK.*

IN all our churches there are already some good regulations, which ought to be kept up; but when they are not sufficient, it is proper to make new ones, and procure some good Establishments.

I. I say, it is proper to preserve good Establishments. There are two sorts of them. They may relate either to discipline or to civil order.

1. With respect to discipline, what we have said before upon it may be sufficient for this head; all that is to be observed here is, that it is proper to keep up good laws, and to support them in their due force.

2. With respect to civil matters, a pastor should promote good order in that point. When
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the people are *submissive* in civil matters, they are likewise so in such as concern religion.

Ministers are interested in making civil regulations observed. This affects them, as pastors; for if the people despise civil laws, they will also despise the laws of the Gospel. A pastor should, therefore, be assiduous in exhorting them to do justice, and to suppress injustice.

The care of a pastor in this article is twofold.

1. With respect to magistrates, he should exhort them to execute their office well. This he may do either in sermons, or in private conversations. The pains that a pastor bestows in this way, are of exceedingly great use.

2. With respect to the people, he should lead them to be obedient to the laws of their temporal superiors*. It is particularly necessary,

* How necessary it is for all our clergy to inculcate strenuously, by precept and example, this principle of obedience on the minds of their people.—How peculiarly necessary in these days, when the boasted liberty of *Britons* so often degenerates into licentiousness, and becomes, instead of a blessing, a fruitful source of misery, of confusion, and every evil work!—How just, as well as animated, are the complaints of a late celebrated author on this subject!—"Liberty, fraught with blessings as it is, when *unabused*, has, perhaps, been abused to our destruction: And as *British* malt, sublimated into the most pernicious liquor, now so much in use, so *British* liberty, carried into licentiousness, has poisoned and brutalized the *British* state. By too much exalting our spirits it corrupts our manners; and that glory of our constitution is the disgrace of our lives.—Heaven preserve thee, my friend, from the freedom, and wisdom, and happiness, now in vogue: He is most free, who is bound by the laws; he is most wise, who owns himself weak: He is most happy, who abridges his *pleasures*; and he is most magnanimous, (O ye bold, intrepid, heaven-defying *Britons*!) who fears his God."—See DR. YOUNG'S *Centaur* not fabulous, page 272.

that he should make them thoroughly comprehend one thing which they comprehend but little---and that is, that they should be subject for conscience-sake, and should obey the laws through a religious principle. The generality of people imagine themselves innocent, so long as they cannot be *judicially* convicted of doing ill. They are guilty of various frauds, such as not paying revenues to princes, and tythes with proper honesty; and yet do not think they are doing any great harm. They should be undeceived in this point.

II. It is proper to establish some good regulations and orders, when they are wanting.—Things are not yet established on the footing they ought to be, and therefore endeavours should be used for raising them to their due perfection.

Establishments depend, either on the magistrate, or the church—or on both of them united. The magistrate may make several very useful Establishments—he may suppress riot, luxury, the profanation of the sabbath, scandals, &c. When he sets about making any such regulation, he should apply sometimes to the prince's officer, or sometimes to those who superintend the civil affairs of a parish, in matters of simple or petty justice.

Establishments may proceed from the church, and with respect to these, they may easily be rendered successful. When I say there are some Establishments that are made by the church, I mean three things :

I. There

1. There are some which depend on the pastor alone. To him it belongs to regulate schools, to prescribe the master's duty, and the method of instructing youth.

2. There are some which depend on the consistory. Such are Establishments of discipline; the execution of which belongs to the consistory.

3. There are, lastly, some which are reserved for the society of pastors. They make general regulations. New Establishments, that are of any consequence, depend on them. Pastors are prohibited, by oath, from making any considerable Establishment without communicating it to that society.

There are some Establishments that are made by the church and magistrate conjointly. They should then act in concert, and take such measures together as are most proper. We have remarked, on another occasion, that it is not proper for us to apply frequently, and solely to the magistrate---except we are obliged by necessity to do it. The church ought to transact her own affairs apart, as much as she can; when, for instance, it is her business to bring to order a scandalous pastor, &c.—but, in other matters, there is no inconvenience in having recourse to the magistrate. There are many things that cannot be done without his assistance; when, for instance, the business is about salaries, endowments, &c. If the magistrate does not interpose, they can never be accomplished.

But as this article is of importance, it is proper to enter into a particular account of it. You should, before all things, recollect this general rule,—that when you are going to make any Establishments, you must use a great deal of prudence. It is not sufficient to undertake any thing good, you must examine, whether the minds of people are well disposed, and the time is proper : otherwise you will never succeed. You must not attempt any thing impossible, nor spoil things by timing them ill. You are bound in wisdom to observe these rules; for, otherwise, you will expose yourselves, and lose your authority.

When you undertake any scheme, you must endeavour not to be prevented from carrying it through. For, if once you miscarry, the scheme you had resolved upon becomes odious, and you will not afterwards be able to succeed in it. When bodies politic have taken any contrary resolutions, they are bound in honour to maintain them. This is the cause of troubles and animosities, and all this arises from a want of prudence.

LECTURE XIII.

S E C T. I.

*Of the different KINDS of ESTABLISHMENTS
that a PASTOR may procure.*

YOU may make three Kinds of Establishments—one for the instruction of youth—another for banishing idleness—and a third for charity.

In the *first place*, you should regulate the instruction of youth. This is the first thing a Pastor ought to do. Of all the means of banishing ignorance and vice, there are none so efficacious as these two.—1. The forming a new generation. 2. The procuring good Pastors. I shall not here repeat what I have already said on this subject.

1. It is proper a Pastor should take the care of schools---should establish some, where there are none*; and he should neglect nothing for this purpose.

* The establishment of Charity-Schools for the religious education of poor children has been a favourite object with many clergy, both of the higher and lower ranks in our church. The great

purpose. He should endeavour to have some good masters, that they may be well relugated. This is of greater importance than is usually imagined. School-masters give the first principles and rudiments of religion. It is proper, therefore, to choose for that employment persons that are capable, well-disposed, and, above all, diligent and patient. Such as are idle, and passionate, are unfit for it; but to require this in a school master is next to requiring an impossibility. There is neither profit nor honour to be gained in that profession; and hence it is, that we meet with so few good masters: nothing, however, ought to be neglected for

great and good bishop KENN is said to be one of the first projectors of those schools, which he set on foot, in order to cure the miserable ignorance of the common-people; he wrote an exposition of the church catechism, calculated for this very end; and he used to say on this occasion,—*That he would try, if he could not lay a foundation to make the next generation better.* See his life prefixed to his *Manual of Prayers*. Dr. Tennison (who succeeded Archbishop Tillotson in the See of Canterbury) is celebrated by Bishop BURNET in the History of his own Times, Vol. I. page 266, for his eminent zeal and charity in promoting the religious instruction of children, by endowing schools for that purpose, whilst he was engaged in the great cure of St. Martin's, London. To these illustrious persons it would be easy to add a large catalogue both of prelates and parochial chergy, who have distinguished themselves by this excellent species of religious charity: By this pious zeal of numerous individuals and societies many charity-schools have been established, within this century, throughout the cities of London and Westminster, and in several other places both in England and Wales. But, alas! there still remain many very many country-villages in this kingdom, where the poor are quite destitute of these means of religious instruction, where most of them are incapable of reading a word in the Bible, and many of them grow up in a most deplorable degree of spiritual ignorance and darkness. I wish I had not too much reason to join with hundreds of my brethren in lamenting this evil.

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this purpose. In order to remedy this inconvenience it would be proper to establish good salaries. A minister should contribute something of himself if he is able *, provided there are no other means of raising a salary—and those states, who superintend the civil affairs of a parish, either cannot, or will not supply one. Children are educated ill, because there are bad school-masters; and there are bad school-masters, because there are no salaries.

In order to make good masters the ministers themselves should instruct them, teach them how they should manage children, and convince them that they should endeavour chiefly to lead youth to piety, &c.

2. A Pastor should visit the schools, as much for the sake of the masters, as the scholars; to see whether the masters teach well, and the scholars improve. Many consider this as a mean office, but they ought to account it a pleasure, and esteem it an honour. From thus visiting the schools they may derive great advantage. They may observe what children are promising. When they meet with such, they should commend and encourage them;—that would give them new ardour. If they are inclined to be vitious, they should admonish them, have them chastised, and speak to their

* Many of our clergy, who are possessed only of poor vicarages, or small rectories, with large families to support and provide for, have little or no power to discharge the duty, which our author so strongly and justly recommends to the attention of Christian Pastors.

fathers and mothers about them; this too would be their best means of coming to the knowledge of their flock. Young people are without disguise—they act openly—and one may easily discover their inclinations. It is proper, that the Pastor likewise should have the care of instructing the children on certain occasions; this may appear trifling, but he will reap great advantages from it. When he meets with children, he may talk with them, and make them come to his house together, in order to praise, or censure them, as they may deserve. He might make some familiar catechisms, as they do in this city, where there is no body but children; that would be of great use in the country. Nothing prevents Pastors from doing this, but idleness, and an attachment to fordid interest.

In the *second place*, he should strive to banish idleness. This should be one of the principal cares of a Pastor. Idleness ruins young people, and is the source of all sorts of disorders. It produces vice and corruption,—misery and poverty,—cheating, pilfering, knavery, &c. In this country there are some churches, where, through the idleness of the people, we find more vices reigning than in other churches. It is therefore necessary to endeavour to make young people active and industrious *; but, for this purpose, it is requisite

* It were much to be wished, that in our charity-schools active industry were always promoted, as much as possible, with religious

quisite that the magistrates, and superintendants of civil affairs, should concur with the Pastor. In vain shall we preach, if they, who have authority, do not unite their efforts to banish idleness.

In the *third place*, there ought to be some regulations made for charity. Christians are obliged to perform every thing that relates to this duty; but Pastors are more so than others, and in a more particular manner.

Before all things, it is necessary to have something to give, and for that purpose to establish funds, which the church may have the disposal of. To establish such funds is one of the most important cares of a minister. One of the first cares, which the apostles had from the time of establishing the gospel and the church, was that of establishing

religious instruction; as children are, otherwise, likely to be more injured by habits of idleness, than benefited by all their acquisitions of learning. This point has, indeed, been duly and successfully consulted in several of these institutions; particularly in one established, some years since, in a country village, by a late worthy clergyman of my acquaintance—Mr. STEPHEN WHITE, rector of HOLTON, in the county of *Suffolk*. This truly pious and faithful Pastor had the happiness to see his judicious plan highly prosperous, and honoured with the generous patronage and assistance of several gentlemen of rank and fortune, especially the late Sir JOHN THOROLD, who neither spared his pen in the cause of religious truth, nor his purse in the support of religious charities. I have mentioned this school at Holton with such commendation, not merely as a tribute of respect due to Mr. WHITE's eminent works and piety, but as it appears to me well-deserving the attention of any gentleman, who may have abilities, and inclination to make a similar establishment in his own parish.—I cannot here insert the particulars of the plan, but they might be obtained by an application to the present master of the school, Mr. LANGHAM.

a fund. Two ways may be used for this end.
1. Alms and ordinary charities. 2. Pious donations and legacies. In making these establishments, which relate to pecuniary matters, it is not proper to proceed too fast; that would create suspicion in the people, who might imagine, that the church is desirous of gaining to herself the wealth of individuals. When there are funds, they should be distributed to the necessitous.

1. To strangers, that are of the household of faith; but it is proper here to use some precaution, and to see whether they have any certificates.

2. To the poor of the place. Poor's-boxes have been established in our churches for poor passengers, on account of the persecutions of the church of France, in the year 1682. The poor of the place ought to be assisted by the superintendants of civil affairs. The money should not be in the minister's hands, but with some person of the consistory. It is usual for ministers to give them letters of recommendation, which they carry to the person who keeps the money. When we wish to give them something beyond the recommendation, we do it with the advice of the consistory, or, at least, of some elders.

3. It is proper to pay regard to such as are incapable of getting their living, or have no relations able to assist them. Those, who are incapable of getting their living, are children, old people, and persons that are infirm. These

These are the principal objects of charity. A Pastor ought, besides this, to visit and take care of them.

With respect to such as are able to get their own living, it is proper to act otherwise; to give them any thing would be encouraging idleness.

4. The money and property of the church may be employed in works of piety and charity, in purchasing good books for the poor, and in paying for the instruction of indigent children. This regards likewise the alms that may be done in private. A Pastor should endeavour, as much as possible, to make the rules, I have now laid before you, well observed.

S E C T. II.

Of the MEANS of preserving AUTHORITY and CREDIT in the CHURCH.

IT is extremely necessary you should have authority in your church; for without that, you may have all possible qualifications, and yet they will be of no service. On that greatly depends the fruit of the ministry.

On this subject there are two things to be considered. The end that should be proposed, and the means of obtaining it.

1. You may deceive yourselves with respect to the end you ought to propose. I do not call

call it having Authority, and Credit, when you are animated with the love of glory, and a spirit of ambition. You should not aim at being honoured, and acquiring worldly applause; that view would be criminal. But, further, if you were to propose those views, you would raise an obstacle against acquiring authority; for nothing is more common than pride and vanity in a minister. You should therefore avoid even the least appearance of vanity, dominion, and what politicians seek for when they would acquire authority. But observe, a Pastor's aim and authority should consist in being feared and loved. Authority is supported by fear and love. This is the end that you ought to propose.

Observe, that I make Authority depend on both these in conjunction; the one will do nothing effectually without the other. Fear without love will produce only an outward restraint. Love without fear usually begets contempt, and licentiousness; but he, who knows how to gain himself both love and fear, will be able to acquire true authority.

II. The principal point to be considered is, what are the means that should be employed to make yourselves both loved and feared. This I shall comprehend in these six maxims. The first is a good life. The second is, being gentle, obliging, and equitable. The third is, behaving with prudence. The fourth is, never forsaking your office. The fifth is, discharging it as you ought. The sixth is, hav-

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ing courage to speak when you ought, and to give private admonitions.

First, You must lead a good life. Nothing, in general, conciliates friendship so much as a holy life. There is no true esteem but what is founded on virtue. If therefore you would acquire credit, you must be *virtuous*, and *grave*. By this *gravity* I understand the following articles.

1. A plain, but decent, exterior.
2. Sobriety, especially in wine.
3. Abstinence from sensual pleasures.
4. A somewhat retired manner of living.

Things that are common are usually despised; and, if you shew yourselves in public company too often, you will scarcely avoid betraying your faults, and discovering your foibles, especially whilst you are young.

5. Your conversation should be prudent, sober, and cautious, &c.

6. Gravity should appear in a serious kind of life; you should observe a reasonable silence.

7. You should apply yourselves to your studies.

8. You should have prudence, discretion, &c. You should render all these compleat by your own reflection. You see I do not speak of piety and christian virtues, but I consider them as the principle of all I have been saying to you.

Thus you see what may truly gain you respect.

Observe,

Observe, on the other hand, what brings ministers into contempt. A worldly exterior, displaying luxury and affectation; too frequent feasting, intemperance, especially drunkenness, and the least approaches to it. The love of pleasures, and diversions in themselves lawful, when they are too frequently sought after, impurity, and every thing that has the least appearance of it;—a too free and open manner of living, especially with persons in whose company you can hardly preserve gravity, such as that of young people, and the female sex;—vain, dissolute, free discourse, light words, railleries, buffooneries, oaths, excessive talking, indiscretion, idleness, &c. If I do not expatiate on all these articles, it is not because they do not well deserve it, but I would recommend them for you to think upon.

Secondly, If it is necessary to have all virtues, there is one of greater importance than all, and that is, to be gentle and obliging, if you would make yourselves beloved. By this you will win the hearts of men. “*Homines demerentur beneficiis.*” This will engage you to some duties which you should observe in your whole conduct.

1. You should, on all occasions, give proofs of charity to such as want it from you, and especially to the poor. Relief, and bowels of compassion, should be always found in a Pastor's house. ST. PAUL would have them *given to hospitality*. Formerly, they were obliged to entertain strangers at their houses. You should therefore

therefore relieve them first: if you are not able to do it of yourselves, do it, at least, by means of others, by your counsels, and by your consolations.

But 2dly, This gentle disposition obliges you to display equity, and an easy accommodating temper. This should be practised both in your ministerial functions, and in your private conduct. As to the first, you should not be too severe, rigid, and difficult of access; you should never be so attached to things of little consequence, as to make them the subject of your censures. That captious and dangerous disposition is odious to all the world. As to the second point, your private conduct, you should observe the same easy, gentle, accommodating temper; you should carefully avoid being stiff, suspicious, and difficult. I must particularly caution you against one dangerous and common fault, which is, that many are too stiff in contending for their interest*; and that betrays a mind greatly attached to the world. I would advise you, in this point, to carry your delicacy even to scrupulousness, and not to receive any presents from people who have any affair before you. When a minister is attentive to interest, the people remark it, and he loses his credit.

* A due measure of disinterestedness is one main requisite for the success of a clergyman's labours. You will therefore avoid all mean attentions to small matters; never be rigorous in your demands of them; never engage in any disputes about them, unless a part of your income, too large to be given up, depends upon them." — *Secker's Charges*, p. 270.

In the *third place*, you must be wise and prudent in your whole conduct. The reason for this is, that the minister's conduct is exposed to the eyes of all the world.

We judge of *public persons* from their manner of living. A man, who knows not how to conduct himself, loses the esteem we had for him. That prudence and wisdom must appear in two things, in the exercise of his office, and in his private conduct.

1. Prudence should accompany a minister in his sermons, in his censures, in the exercise of discipline, in visiting the sick, &c.

2. He should support the same character in his private conduct. For, if we observe a minister imprudent in his own private affairs, we shall judge him to be the same in things of the greatest importance. When we see a man encumbering himself with business that does not become him, engaging in bad undertakings, managing his own family ill, running fast into debt, and doing nothing, we form a bad opinion of him. It is difficult for a man, who is void of conduct in his own private affairs, to have any in those of the church.—See 1 Tim. iii. 5. *If a man, (says ST. PAUL) know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God.*

In the *fourth place*, in order to acquire authority, a minister must never forsake his character and office.

By this I mean, that he must never meddle with affairs that do not concern him. This, however,

however, must not be taken in so general a sense, as if he were never to interpose in any affairs, but those of the pastoral office. He should take care of his own affairs, make peace in families, and terminate the differences of his parishioners—but with these two restrictions:

1. He must do it as a minister—with views of piety and charity—and not with worldly views.

2. With discretion, and in such a manner as may by no means degrade his office.

This will be better comprehended by the two following maxims.

The first maxim is this—that he must never meddle with any thing that concerns the magistrate, and belongs to his office. A minister very often makes himself ridiculous, when he is fond of interfering in those things; and that raises the jealousy of the magistrates. Besides, Ministers usually succeed very ill, when they meddle with civil affairs. If, however, they are consulted upon any point, they may give their opinion with modesty; and likewise if they have some important advice to give in any affair, they may acquaint the magistrate with it privately—but never in the pulpit.

The second maxim, which explains the first, and may serve for another precaution, is this, that ministers must not intrude into private affairs—nor enter into family secrets. They should never set themselves up for judges or dividers. This JESUS CHRIST teaches us in the Gospel: “*Man! who made me a judge,*

on divider over you?" said he to a man that would have engaged him in a certain affair, LUKE xii. Every one, therefore, should keep to his own vocation; ours is so holy an one, that we ought not to mix it with other affairs: Besides, it requires entirely the whole man.

In the *fifth place*, a minister must discharge his office as he ought. He must be firm and exact in its various functions, exert zeal, and proceed in all respects as his office requires, without ever letting himself down. In preaching he must reprove vice wherever it is to be reproved. In the exercise of discipline he must never be biased, nor favour any person to the prejudice of justice. A man who always acts uprightly is feared and loved. Offenders will not flatter themselves, that they shall find any support for him. It is true, that some will take it ill, but that not for a long time; whereas, if he is found to be biased on two or three occasions, he will lose his credit the remainder of his life.

In the *sixth place*, A minister must give private admonitions. This, indeed, is comprehended in the preceding article; but I make a separate head of it, because it deserves peculiar attention. It is, therefore, necessary to have courage to admonish people in whatever concerns their salvation, either in health or sickness. Nothing gives a minister more authority, provided he does it with prudence and piety. In doing this he must not act from policy to gain credit, but from conscience.

General

General censures sometimes produce an effect quite contrary to what you expect from them. They, whom those censures regard, are well aware that you have them in view; but when you do not speak to them in private, they imagine that you are afraid of them, and dare not speak those things to their face; and thus you will lose your credit. If you have any concern of that sort with good people, they will be offended if you do not admonish them in private. What is said in private admonitions is well received, and they have an esteem for pastors who address them in such exhortations.

As to people that offend publicly, they ought to be publicly reproved; such are they who swear, and indulge in impious conversation. When a pastor thus deals with them, provided it be with prudence, the mere sight of him, or the fear that he will come to the knowledge of their conduct, is a restraint upon sinners. Some will be enraged at first, but they will recover themselves, and cannot help having an esteem for their pastor.

S E C T. III.

The MEANS that YOUNG MEN in particular, should employ to gain themselves CREDIT in their MINISTRY.

TO acquire authority is difficult at every age, but particularly so in the time of youth. We respect old people on account of

their age, even when they have no great merit. On the contrary, we despise young people, even with merit, merely because they are young. The ministry, notwithstanding, demands a great deal of respect. Young men do not naturally attract it, and yet they should endeavour to acquire it. Our youth sometimes decides our character for the whole of our life: When once we are fallen into contempt, we never retrieve ourselves. Now in order to discover what young ministers should do to acquire authority, we should examine what are the faults of youth which create contempt; these are giddiness, imprudence, want of gravity, fondness for gaiety and pleasure, but, above all, pride and self-conceit. It is a prevailing opinion, that young ministers have these faults, and for that reason people do not submit to them. You should therefore have these things constantly before your eyes. It was this obliged ST. PAUL to advise TIMOTHY, who was in other respects so holy and pious, *Let no man despise thy youth.*

In order, therefore, to acquire authority sometimes, it is necessary, 1st, to avoid the faults we have just enumerated; and 2dly, to endeavour to attain the opposite virtues that will render old age venerable. These are wisdom, prudence, circumspection, gravity, a serious life, remote from every thing that betrays a giddy, inconstant, and wanton spirit. For this purpose, it is necessary, that young ministers should have this rule always in mind, "never to go on too fast in what they are doing."

When

When we have had experience, we may determine a point immediately without trouble, because we are versed in the business; but a young man of no experience may find himself embarrassed, whatever talents he may otherwise possess. He should, therefore, be diffident of himself, and take time, either to think upon the business he is concerned in, or to consult others about it; but this he should do, without discovering his embarrassment to the people, for that would produce a bad effect.

When I say, that young ministers should be grave, you must understand me with these two precautions.

The 1st is, that your gravity should not be too severe, nor too remote from your time of life; you ought not to be too reserved, nor affected; that would be infallibly attributed to pride or self-conceit; and nothing is more likely to ruin the credit of young ministers than pride. Their gravity should consist in a large fund of humility, modesty, and courtesy.

The 2d precaution is this, that when young ministers are obliged to use their authority, they should always do it with moderation, caution, and modesty. There is a certain degree of authority, which is only becoming in old men: what they determine we think not impertinent, but we should blame it in a young man. For this reason, ST. PAUL reminds TIMOTHY, *not to reprove an old man rudely*, 1 Tim. v. 1.*

if

* This version of the French translators I cannot but esteem preferable to that of our own,—“*rebuke not an Elder*,” because

If you would *attain* to that, which ought to be your grand aim, you must not put off the practice of these things till you are in orders. You should begin it from the present instant, and that for two reasons, to which I should wish you to pay attention.

The first is, that when you have contracted habits repugnant to the virtues we have described, you will not easily get rid of them. When you have led a dissipated life, and have associated with persons that ruin your gravity, as young people, and those of the female sex*, you will not procure respect without a great deal of difficulty. Though a minister should change his conduct, yet he would always leave a bad opinion of himself upon the minds of the people.

When you have once fixed upon yourselves the character of a light, wanton man, that will

it is free from the *ambiguity* of the word "*Elder*;" and, likewise, expresses more fully the true sense of the original word *ἐπιπαιξής*.

* Perhaps this repeated caution, against the danger of a young minister's associating with the female sex, will be censured by many as a very unpolite and uncandid reflection. But let it be remembered, (my *English* readers!) that this caution was given to a set of pupils in *Switzerland*, where the ladies have (it seems) been long devoted to excessive gaiety and dissipation. At least, I can assure you, they were represented in this light, about six years ago, by a young gentleman of liberal education, who was then on his travels in that country; and in a letter to a young lady in England, he thus exclaims: "*I bless my stars, that I am not obliged to take a wife among the daughters of the Swiss—so vain, so trifling, and so silly; perhaps my sisters had been all these, if their education had been of the same stamp.*"—After this, who can blame a grave and pious professor of divinity for speaking a plain and useful truth, tho' it reflected some dishonour on his own country?

continue a long time in their minds: you should therefore regulate your hearts and your conduct, and be such whilst students in divinity, as you should be when you become ministers. - Act in such a manner at present, that the world may have an esteem for you, and remember well that they are attentive to your ways, and have an eye on your faults. They will pass over such things in private persons—but with respect to you they will rather exaggerate them.

The way to conceal your faults is to lead a grave and retired life. Retirement is an excellent preparation for the sacred ministry, provided it be not a retirement of idleness, and such as may prevent you from seeing persons whose conversation might promote your improvement.

You must next be ever careful to shew a great deal of humility; flee from pride, and remember, that there is a spirit of contempt and jealousy universally prevalent against ministers. The people of the world endeavour to find out their faults, and seek for pretences to depreciate and despise them. When they cannot find in them any manifest faults, they tax them with pride; whereas, if you lead rather a retired life, you will enter into the ministry with honour, and procure the esteem of mankind.

Consider further, that they who make themselves respected whilst they are young, are in a condition to reap considerable advantage, and to attain to a great degree of authority. When a man cannot be reproached with the faults of his

his youth, he acts with courage, and is respected; and if he be respected in his youth, what will he not be when age and experience have given a new *lustre* to his merit?

S E C T. IV.

Of the DUTIES of MINISTERS towards particular Persons.

IF I were to determine what ministers ought to be with respect to every individual, I should be obliged to make a great number of heads. They must conduct themselves towards every one suitably to his condition. We have said something on this point already, and shall not enter into a particular account of this matter here.

I shall only remark, that there are two Duties of a private and most important nature, which Ministers should discharge towards two sorts of persons—the first of which are sinners—the second are sick and dying persons. Hence arise two kinds of Duties. To the first, they must give private admonitions; and as to the sick, they must VISIT THEM.

S E C T. V.

Of PRIVATE ADMONITIONS.

IT is not my design to speak to you of those Admonitions, that are to be given in the pulpit—but of those that should be given, on certain occasions, in private.

Private Admonitions are to be given on two occasions; either when sinners come to ask your advice; or when they do not ask it, tho' they need it, and pastors give it them of their own accord.

I. First it were to be wished, that ministers had more opportunities of giving these kinds of Admonitions, but they have been *robbed* of their rights in this point. The common people and sinners scarcely know, whether they ought to consult their pastors. This obliges me to tell you, that you should instruct the people in the necessity there is for consulting their pastors. In those admonitions, for which you are consulted, you will succeed much better than in those which you give of yourselves. The reason of this is clear. When a person comes to consult you, it is a proof that he is disposed to take every thing well you shall say to him: it is conscience that leads him to it.

The cases, on which you may be consulted, are infinitely various, and therefore I cannot
4 point

point them all out to you: I shall content myself with offering you only some general maxims.

Two sorts of cases occur—either such as are clear—or such as are embarrassing.

1. If they are clear, you must decide them by the word of God, when they are cases of conscience; or by the laws of discipline and custom, when they are cases of discipline. However little experience you have, you will not be embarrassed in these kinds of cases; you have nothing to do, but to speak your sentiments with sincerity.

2. There are some cases more embarrassing, especially in matters of conscience: These require a great deal of discernment and sincerity in pastors: When a man comes to consult you, you are the director of his conscience. If you lead him wrong, you are responsible for the sins he may commit by following your advice. The rules, therefore, that should be observed in these embarrassing cases are these four.

First Rule. You must not be precipitate, either in the examination of the fact, or in the judgment you form from it. You should examine the fact with care, and in all its circumstances. Remember well, that the most trifling circumstance will sometimes change a case entirely. Proceed not too fast in your judgment, and consider maturely the decision you are going to make, lest you should oblige people to take some false steps. When you do not clearly discern what answer you should make, you must not be ashamed of desiring some time to think upon it.

Second

Second Rule. It is necessary to have some lights; a pastor will not be able to discharge his duty without them. For this purpose, it is proper to study cases of conscience. We have several books on this subject, amongst others SANDERSON *de Oblig. Consc.* is esteemed one of the best. I approve, therefore, of your applying yourselves to that study. Without that you will be in danger of falling into two extremes equally dangerous, either of binding the conscience rashly, or of loosing it so. You would fall into the first, when, for instance, you would oblige to *restitution* people who should not be obliged to it; and into the other, when you would exempt them from it improperly.

The study of casuistry is an endless work; but there is one way of shortening it, and that is—to have a good conscience, and to study yourselves: Whence is it that ministers are sometimes biased? It is because they have *not* piety: A man who has, discerns the right way at first. He does not suffer himself to be hurried away with passions and prejudices, which are the usual sources of our errors.

Third Rule. You must have sincerity. As a judge, who, after he has examined a cause, should pronounce sentence agreeably to the dictates of his conscience, so pastors should never be biased, nor make abatements to flatter sinners. They should never weaken the decisions, nor soften the precepts of the gospel. Hence, besides your committing a great sin, when sinners come afterwards to be undeceived, they will

will have a very bad opinion of you. They who act from political views contradict themselves, and none but good people support themselves equally at all times.

Fourth Rule. The fourth maxim, which ought to be religiously observed, is the keeping of a secret *. This comprehends two duties:

1. Pastors should keep a secret inviolable above every thing entrusted to them. You cannot, therefore, without committing a great sin, divulge a thing you have been entrusted with. The secrets of confession, in the Romish church, are considered as a sacred matter. I know there are abuses, especially in their auricular confession; but their maxims with regard to the secret are just. You should particularly keep a secret, when it relates to certain delicate cases, such as impurity, theft, &c. Then all the honour of an individual, and sometimes of a whole family, is in the hands of a pastor. If, therefore, he should divulge things, he would lose all his credit and confidence.

2. He ought to keep a secret in such a manner, that the sinner may acquit his conscience. When a sinner can satisfy his conscience, and make reparation for his fault without exposing himself publicly, he ought to do it: provided that may be done without violating the laws

* "The priest is strictly obliged not to discover what he is told in confession; and he must be a very inconsiderate man, and no way deserving his sacred character, who will do it."—Mr. SPINCKES's *Sick Man visited*. The *Illd Visit*.—See also a striking passage from St. Jerom on this duty, in BINGHAM, B. VI. Ch. II. §. 10.

of the gospel and of discipline. For example, sins of impurity and theft should be repaired in secret, if they are attended with no scandalous circumstances. But if they have consequences that give scandal to their neighbours, they ought to make reparation for them in public.

LECTURE XIV.

E. C. T. I.

Of the ADMONITIONS that are to be given to those that do not ask them, and yet have need of them.

I SHALL now proceed to those private Admonitions that should be given to such as do not ask them, and yet have need of them. These I distinguish into two sorts; for either there occur some occasions of giving them which we do not seek for, or we seek after those occasions. With respect to the first sort, I shall not expatiate largely upon them, but shall make only three reflections.

1. In general, when a pastor hears of persons that sin, he should reprove them; such are they that swear, quarrel, fight, indulge in obscene conversation, &c. He ought to reprove them upon these occasions, otherwise the silence of a pastor would be scandalous: above all, if there are public scandals, he must admonish the offenders for the edification of others.

2. He

2. He should reprove finners with prudence, and must consider whether it is always proper to reveal every thing he sees and hears. He must not expose himself to quarrel every moment about trifles. If the offence is of little consequence, a slight Admonition may suffice. Even when the case seems to demand censure, it is not always proper to give it. Thus to censure them when they are drunk, or in the height of passion, would be reproving them unreasonably *. That is not a proper time; he should suffer people to recover themselves, and then speak to them, and shew them the wrong they have done. He should, however, use this precaution; that if sinners are guilty of scandalous offences in the presence of several people, he should say something to them; but that should be more for the sake of the standers-by, than the sinner himself.

3. When you reprove persons that offend in public, you should do it powerfully, but not *passionately*. It is necessary to give you this advice †; for hasty, and sudden emotions, are

* To what end should you expostulate with a man in a passion? That he may hear reason?—But how can you expect he can hear reason, as long as his passion has got the better of his reason?—How can you expect *he* should hear the voice of that charmer, whom anger has made deaf to all her remonstrances? Wait but till reason resumes its empire, and then speak to him, in the softer seasons of address. SEED'S Sermons, Vol. I. p. 62.

† As you are not to reprimand any person during the emotion of *his* passion; so neither are you to do it during the emotion of *your own*. What the philosopher said about punishing, you may apply here, and say, "I would chide you if I were not angry."—For you will be apt to carry things too far; or if you

are frequently violent; as those—when you are obliged to admonish a man on a sudden, unexpected occasion. When we reprove sinners, we usually fall into one of these two excesses. Either we reprove with too much heat, or with timidity. Are you, for instance, engaged in censuring a man whom you find guilty of some scandalous offence in the streets, you will then be apt to speak with too much heat and chagrin, and fall into a passion; but in private Admonitions you will be subject to act with timidity. When you are in private conversation, you will be studying evasions, preambles, &c. YOU SHOULD CAREFULLY AVOID BOTH THESE EXTREMES.

I said in the second place, that there are Admonitions which you must seek occasions to give. I have two things to remark to you on this subject, that deserve attention; their importance and necessity; their nature, and the manner of giving them.

I. I should not prove this necessity, if, evident as it is, it were not almost unknown. I am still further obliged to it, because we have naturally an aversion from reproving others, and are restrained by shame and timidity. This is one of the most dangerous temptations a pastor is exposed to. Observe, therefore, the considerations you should have upon your mind, that may one day oblige you to reprove sin-

do not, yet what you say will have less weight, as it will be looked upon as the result of rage and fury, not the product of cool, sedate reason. *SEED'S Sermons*, ut supra.

ners.

ners. I say this to you, that you may admonish the people of it in your sermons, that they may be disposed to take every thing well that you shall say to them. Observe here the proof of this necessity.

1. Several passages of sacred scripture establish it. EZEKIEL xxxiii. 6. *So thou, O son of man, I have set thee a watchman unto the house of Israel; therefore thou shalt hear the word at my mouth, and warn them from me.* ST. PAUL says, that *our guides watch for our souls, as they that must give account.* Heb. xiii. 17. How should they watch for them, or give an account of them, if they do not know them, and take no method of doing it. St. Paul too says—that he had not neglected teaching both publicly, and from house to house, Acts xx. 20. and, besides this, we have the example of the saints in the Old and New Testament. See how NATHAN admonished DAVID, and JOHN the BAPTIST reproved HEROD. Ecclesiastical History affords likewise several examples of the same kind.

2. Without those Admonitions it is impossible to procure the salvation of sinners: for how can it be procured without them? Will it be said—*there are sermons?* But though sermons were the best in the world, yet they would not be sufficient. We very often preach in vain; they, who have need of hearing them, do not attend them, and they, who do attend, do not hear all—there are but few amongst them, who apply to themselves what concerns

them—sometimes the hearers do not comprehend what we say, and, in short, there are few that profit from them. We must, therefore, either suffer such people to perish, or else admonish them in private. A minister, that would choose the first, must be a profligate, or an atheist. It is therefore necessary to admonish those who sin. Nothing else remains to save them. Moreover, sermons are not sufficient, for another reason; there are some things which cannot be brought into a pulpit; and there are some cases which decency and gravity will not allow us to handle in a sermon. Besides this, in order to convince and reclaim a sinner, it is necessary to satisfy his doubts. Now this cannot be done, except in private conversation. For example, I know a merchant, a mechanic, a labourer, &c. who have certain artifices, and each of them a peculiar method of imposing on their neighbours; but one cannot specify these before a congregation, and, therefore, it is necessary to have recourse to private Admonitions.

3. All Christians are obliged to reprove their neighbour when he sins, much more ought ministers to do it. I take it for granted without proving it, that Christians are called to admonish their brethren; how much more then are ministers, who are established for that purpose, and must give an account of the souls committed to their trust.

4. I prove this from hence, that it is inconceivable how a pastor can have a love for his

his flock, and have their salvation at heart, without discharging this duty. For if we interest ourselves in their salvation, we shall exert all our ability to procure it, and admonish them even when our office would not oblige us to it.

You see, that charity alone indispensably requires our observance of this duty; how much more *that* charity which ought to animate a pastor.

5. If it is the duty of a minister to visit the sick, the dying, and the afflicted, as all the world agree; is he not likewise obliged to visit and reprove sinners? Is not his engagement even far stronger? I hold it as a fact, that it is more necessary to labour the conversion of sinners, than to administer consolation to the afflicted; and, with respect to sinners, it is far more salutary to admonish them in the time of health, than at the approach of death. If you suffer sinners to come to the last extremity, I leave you to consider in what sins you will involve yourselves, and how you will be able to give an account of them. I must, therefore, exhort you to arm yourselves betimes with resolution and courage; and, in order to habituate yourselves to this, admonish each other sincerely of your respective faults.

Before I take my leave of this subject, I cannot avoid observing to you the terrible remissness of ministers in this point. Several reformed ministers would laugh at you, if you were to talk to them of this duty; even

the most distinguished of them are not willing to hear it spoken of. They persuade themselves, that when they have preached and are come down from the pulpit, they have done their duty *. But suffer not yourselves to be seduced : conversation and private admonition sometimes do much more good than a great number of sermons. Be careful therefore to discharge this duty, when God shall call you to serve any church. There are sometimes people that will be offended at what you say to them, but the generality will think themselves much obliged to you.

II. Now with respect to the nature of private Admonitions, there are two things to be considered on this subject. On what occasions they should be given, and the manner of giving them. First, It is proper to reprove those who sin, and whose bad life is come to the knowledge of the public, or of the pastor in private : but it is necessary that the fact be certain. It is asked, " Whether we may not admonish sinners upon mere reports ? " I answer, in general, there is need of great discretion, and we should not credit reports too lightly, nor admonish too soon upon such simple reports. Nevertheless, when the report

* Should this book fall into the hands of any ministers of this persuasion (if such there be) amongst us, I would humbly and earnestly intreat them to weigh coolly, and impartially, our author's reflections on this subject, and recollect seriously their solemn engagements on their being admitted into *priests* orders ; and then I hope they will be fully convinced of the fatal tendency of their error, and misconduct.

is confirmed by several means, and there is some probability in it, we may admonish sinners in this manner, and tell them, that there prevail such reports concerning them; that they are innocent, or guilty. If they are innocent, they ought to consider whether they have not given occasion to such reports; and they should be admonished to abstain from the appearance of evil. If they are guilty, they should correct themselves, and prevent scandal.

One thing I shall add, which is very little thought of, and that is, that you should admonish good people when they grow remiss. This is of importance to their salvation, and to the public edification: when they fall, they occasion, by their fall, a great deal of scandal: so, when people express a willingness to profit from the Admonitions you have given them, you should encourage them in their good dispositions. You should neglect no person, and those last still less than others. It should seem, that, being children of God, charity binds us more closely to them. Besides, you are sure they will take every thing well you say to them. In the second place, as to the *manner* of admonishing. You should observe the three maxims I recommended for the censures pronounced either in the pulpit, or the consistories; and those are, to reprove with zeal, with charity, and with prudence. I shall observe here what relates to our subject.

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1. You

1. You should admonish individuals with zeal. Zeal is very necessary on these occasions, without that, false shame and timidity would restrain you. More zeal is required to speak thus to people in private, than to thunder from the pulpit. Observe, there is above all great need of it, when you are to speak to considerable persons; to your equals, or inferiors, you are not afraid of speaking; but here you are in great danger of yielding to false shame; and you must have true zeal to discharge your duty in this point.

2. You must admonish with charity and mildness, otherwise your Admonitions may be attributed to jealousy, anger, or some other passion. Those Admonitions, that do not appear to flow from a principle of charity, or love, produce no great effect: you should, therefore, always endeavour to convince the persons you are speaking to, that you are actuated by a concern for their salvation.

3. The principal thing, that should be observed in the manner of giving these Admonitions, is prudence. For this reason, you should speak to people in certain circumstances, when they may be most capable of profiting by it. Censures are in themselves disagreeable. You should, therefore, know how to embrace a proper time for giving them.

The principal maxims of prudence, that may be observed in private Admonitions, are these:

1. You

1. You should pay regard to the humour, the natural disposition, and the state of those to whom you speak. If you are concerned with considerable persons, you should pay a certain respect to them, and manage them a little. If with high-spirited people, you must not exasperate them.

2. You should proportion your Admonitions to the nature of the fault in question. If the fault is not a great one, a simple Admonition will suffice. If it is a considerable one, you should put on an air of authority, and speak with energy. Above all, if the offence be scandalous, you must not spare the offenders.

3. You may either speak to sinners directly, and without any *ambiguity*; or indirectly, and lead them to a confession of their sin. This was the method NATHAN adopted.

4. You must admonish by means of another, when you cannot do it yourselves. You will one day experience the utility of this maxim. When we have a numerous flock, we cannot attend to all; and it is sometimes out of our power to visit people. There are frequently two reasons which oblige us not to go to their houses, because others would imagine that it is for such, or such a purpose; and that would only irritate the offenders. A man, who has committed a fault, would be displeased with its being known; and, as it would be discovered if the minister were seen going to his house, it would be better to give your Admonitions

nitions through means of another, and to choose for that purpose some friend, or person of probity.

5. Another maxim, which is one of the principal, is to know how to embrace a proper time. All times are not proper: you should not admonish sinners under the emotions of their passions, or the influence of prejudice. In general, a minister should be careful not to intrude unseasonably, and should avoid exposing himself.

6. The last rule, which is a very useful maxim, is, to visit people in the times of sickness and affliction; at seasons of great devotion—such are those of the communion, and when you learn that a sinner is penitent. These are the most proper seasons for giving Admonitions, and it may be presumed they will be well taken. These circumstances ought to be improved so much the more, as they happen but seldom, and sometimes not oftener than three or four times in a man's whole life. A minister should, therefore, profit from them, lest he bring a burden upon his conscience. To all that I have been saying I must add one thing more, and that is, that whatever precautions may be used, those Admonitions will, notwithstanding, be never taken well, unless people have a high opinion of the pastor's integrity who gives them. Men, who do not love censure from any person, will be still more impatient at hearing their faults reprov-
ed

ed by a minister in whom they have something to reprove *.

Hence you should further remark, how necessary it is to have piety and the fear of God in this function. Without being truly good men, you will not be able to succeed, either in this, or your other functions, as I have already observed to you. This therefore should engage you to holiness of heart and life.

S E C T. II.

On visiting the Sick.

VISITING the Sick is one of the most important functions of the ministry †, as it is performed at a time when men are ready to leave the world; and that time determines

* It has been well observed by an elegant and pious writer, that "He who undertakes to reprove the world, must be one whom the world cannot reprove." Dr. HOME's Life of St. John the Baptist, p. 81.

† Many of our own divines have published treatises on this branch of the ministerial office, from most of which a young clergyman may collect some useful directions and assistance; though some of them indeed are rather calculated for the use of the sick person, than of the minister who attends him.

Any of the following books may be consulted.

1. The Clergyman's Companion for visiting the Sick.
2. Dr. CONEY's Companion for a Sick Bed.
3. Mr. SPINCKES's Sick Man visited.
4. Dr. DODWELL's Sick Man's Companion, or the Clergyman's Assistant in visiting the Sick.

Besides these books, I would earnestly recommend Dr. STEARNE's Latin Tract, entitled, *Tractatus de Visitatione Infirmorum*, which is entirely appropriated to the direction of young ministers,

mines their fate to all eternity. It is particularly so with respect to ministers; it is the last care they have to take for sinners, and God will require their blood at the hands of him who has suffered them to perish.

This function is also one of those which are very ill discharged. The generality of ministers use no preparation for it, notwithstanding it is no less difficult than important. They prepare themselves for sermons, but not for visiting the Sick. A new proof, that the ministry is frequently executed ill. This subject is rendered embarrassed, because there is no author that treats it to the bottom. We have the *charitable visits of Mr. DRELINCOURT*, in which there are some excellent things—a great deal of devotion and piety, &c. The reading of them cannot fail of being very useful, but the fault of this author is, that in all his books he labours only to comfort, and promise salvation to sinners too hastily. He does not take sufficient pains first to know a sinner's conscience to the bottom. At the beginning of his visit he represents to you a sinner hardened and ignorant, and in less than a quarter of an hour, he promises him salvation. But in my opinion, a sinner cannot, without a miracle, be changed so suddenly*.

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ministers, and contains, in a small compass, a great variety of excellent rules and precepts. This Latin tract was reprinted at London in 1768, and an English translation of it published a few years since.

* “There cannot be any greater treachery to souls, that is more fatal, and more pernicious, than the giving quick and
easy

We have likewise a treatise by Mr. LA PLACETTE, intitled "*The Death of the Righteous.*" That book contains some excellent maxims—but is too diffuse. It is rather calculated to shew the duty of the dying persons, than that of pastors. The prayers in it are not so simple as they should be.

Besides these, we have GAUSSEN *de Usu Clavium*. But that book regards only one function of pastors, which is, that they should not announce salvation to all sick persons without distinction. Nevertheless, that small tract is excellent, and may afford some important hints.

I purpose to give you my own sentiments on this subject. But I shall make two previous reflections—the 1st regards the time when sick persons should be visited—the 2d, the qualities that a minister should have for discharging this function properly.

I. He should visit them as soon as possible. For this purpose he should do *two* things.

1. He should exhort the people not to put off sending for the pastor to visit the sick, till they are in the last extremity. This is a very bad, inveterate custom in this country. It is a remain of Popery—the Papists are not used to send for the priest, except when the sick man is in the agonies of death, to give him extreme unction, and the sacrament.

easy hopes, upon so short, so forced, and so imperfect a repentance. It not only makes those persons perish securely themselves, but it leads all about them to destruction."—BURNET'S *Pastoral Care*, Chap. VIII.—See also our *Author's Treatise on the Causes of Corruption*, Part II. Cause III.

2. He

2. He should visit the sick without being sent for. He should acquaint himself with those that are in his church—and that for two reasons. First, for the sake of the sick persons themselves. He cannot visit them with advantage, if he does not visit them whilst they are yet at ease. The visits he makes them in their extremity are but of little service. He should censure the relations, if they do not send for him in good time. Secondly, for his own convenience; for, by these means, he may make those visits at a time, that is not inconvenient to him, and may be excused from going to them in the night, and at disagreeable hours.

II. With respect to the qualities requisite for those that would discharge this function, they have need of light, zeal, piety, and devotion. They are still more necessary here than in other functions. A man, who has not zeal and piety, will by no means succeed. You shall see ministers do wonders in the pulpit, who succeed very ill with the sick. To shew that piety is necessary, you need only remark, that you have three functions to perform with the sick: You must sound their conscience, give them necessary counsels, and pray for them.

1. In order to sound the conscience, you must have other lights besides those you meet with in books. You must be enlightened in matters of piety and devotion. You must have patience to learn their condition, and to sound their heart. A man who is not animated with true zeal will never take this pains.

2. You will by no means be able to give necessary counsels to a sick person without piety and zeal. Counsels are dry things without devotion, and one often takes false measures.

3. With respect to prayer, you will not succeed in it, if you have not true zeal. The gift of prayer is only to be met with in devout persons. You should consider this as a great motive to piety.

I proceed now to the thing itself. There are three things to be done with the sick.

1. To inform yourselves of their condition, and sound their conscience. 2. To address to them proper counsels, exhortations, promises, and threatnings. 3. To pray for them.

S E C T. III.

How a PASTOR should sound the CONSCIENCE of a SICK PERSON.

THE first care of a Pastor should be to learn the state of a Sick Person, and his dispositions.

It would be deceiving himself to imagine, that he must visit the Sick for the sake of haranguing and making sermons by their bed-side. See GAUSSEN, page 344. The most favourable judgment, we can form of ministers who act thus, is, that they are extremely ignorant.

There are three ways of coming at the knowledge of a sick man's Conscience. The Pastor may

may learn it by himself, from the persons that attend the sick, or from the sick man himself.

I. The Pastor should recollect what he may know by himself, and consider how the sick man behaved before his sickness. If he is aware, that the sick man had fallen into any great crime, or lived in the indulgence of any vicious habit, he should lay it before him. This shews the necessity there is of knowing his flock

II. He should also inform himself from those who have been most with the sick person, what are his prevailing sentiments, what his discourse, and what his actions—whether he is afraid of death or not, how he has lived, &c. This article is necessary, because we often do not know the sick, or they cannot answer us. We cannot have too many lights on this subject. I must remind you, that there are great disorders committed in this point. The bye-standers will sometimes give the sick person a very good character and extol him. You must therefore receive with discretion what they say, and acquaint them, that they should not indulge the sick person in his security.

III. The surest means of acquiring the knowledge of the sick man's state is to draw it from himself. To succeed in this point two things are requisite: First, Time and leisure. Secondly, To converse with the sick man in private.

1. There is need of time; it cannot be done in haste. For a man to prepare himself for giving

giving up the great account of his life to God is not the business of a moment.

When the sick persons are those whom you have frequently visited, and have long been acquainted with, you need not enter into such particular enquiries with them; but when you are not acquainted with them, there is need of time and patience to discover whether they are not under some delusions, and to know whether they are penitent.

The first thing, therefore, that you should do, is to ask the sick man how he does; whether he is able to talk; whether he can bear a pretty long conversation, and whether he is glad to see you? If you find him weak, and in great pain, you should have the discretion not to discourse with him long, but content yourselves with telling him such things as are essential, and order his relations to send for you when he is easier. —

2. Another necessary thing is, to *see* the sick in private, whether you have any thing particular to say to them, or they have some secret to communicate to you. That cannot be done in the presence of many people. I should first observe to you, that it is not the custom to visit the sick in private. Many disapprove, and others approve of it. See GAUSSEN, page 384. But you should not omit doing always such things as are proper, and endeavouring to establish that *order* which is best. You should, at least, ask the sick person if he has any thing *particular*

ticular to say to you? and if he says, *yes*, you should make the people leave the room.

It would be a very great crime to neglect this article: Observe, however, that you must act with prudence; not be too curious, nor abuse your authority, by requiring certain confessions, as they do in the Romish church.

Let us now consider, what you ought to say to a sick person, when you are with him. You should not talk a great deal, but leave him to talk—put some questions to him—attend to his answers, and then speak to him agreeably to the *hints* he gives you—nearly as a physician does to his patient.

Now if you have never so little sight, you will presently judge of his dispositions—especially if you were acquainted with him before. When you find a man sensible of his past conduct, and *deeply affected* with his sins, this is a good sign. But this is not all. You will often find people that appear very calm, and think of going to heaven, yet speak of their sins only in a vague, superficial manner. In this case, a minister has only to prepare himself for a great deal of trouble, for to undeceive such people is extremely difficult. In general, you should distrust sick persons, for here distrust is the mother of safety. You must not rely upon their first discourse. I have visited sick people, who appeared to me extremely well-disposed, and gave me a good opinion of them, till, upon touching them on certain points, I found them under the influence of impious sentiments, and a strange obstinacy.

obstinacy. *The heart of man is deceitful and desperately wicked.*

If, therefore, you should meet with a sick man full of confidence, tell him, that is well; that he who can thus trust in God is happy; but ask him on what he builds his confidence. By these means you may be able to undeceive him, and enter on the subject with him. If men would make use of their *lights*, one should have less to do; but pastors must assist them.

There is here one thing to be considered, and that is, whether the sick persons are well-instructed, or not. In this last case every thing you say to them is but of little service. It is then a very tedious task to make them Christians—you must, however, do all you can for them. When you meet with any of these ignorant people, you should give them an idea of religion, but keep to essentials; this is particularly proper with *peasants*. You should talk to them of fundamental articles, of baptism, judgment, heaven, and hell. Tell them that they are going to die, but that all who die do not go to heaven; but do this in a simple manner. There are too some occasions, on which it is proper to talk to them in their own *vulgar dialect*. After instruction you should proceed to examination; enquire into the state of their conscience, and examine them about their past life. It is by these means you should lead them to the knowledge of themselves, lest they should die in their security and perish. But it is necessary

to acquaint you with the principal delusions that sick persons fall into.

I. One of the most general delusions is this, that most of them imagine themselves good people, provided they have committed no crimes punishable by the magistrate, or by virtue of ecclesiastical discipline. This is particularly the persuasion of the common people; for, when you ask them, how they have lived, and what is the state of their conscience, they will answer you, full of confidence, that they have never wronged any person, have never been before a justice, or in the consistory. This is an illusion which you must endeavour to *prevent*. For this purpose you should tell them, that it is something not to have committed such crimes—but that *that* is not sufficient; that we are called to something more—that men do not observe their secret sins, and those of the heart—that they may be free from those crimes, and yet be condemned for the love of the world; for pride, covetousness, &c.

II. Many imagine themselves good, because they have the appearances of piety. If a man be never so little instructed he may clearly see, that something more is required than a freedom merely from gross crimes. Many therefore imagine, that in order to be good, they must, besides this, go to church, pray to God night and morning, give alms, &c. and that with this they are good christians. You should therefore take care that the sick do not take the externals of piety for piety itself, and thus fall into

an error. You should convince them, that God requires something more than those outward performances, and that he particularly demands sincerity of heart.

III. There are some that go much farther. They have, besides these externals, certain moral or *worldly* virtues, which they highly esteem. We meet with some who have a love for right, justice, &c. but so far are they from elevating themselves to Christian holiness, that they are utter strangers to it. These are the people of whom Mr. GAUSSEN so elegantly says, "*qui supra Paganitatem non assurgunt.*" These people have never experienced what it is to love God, to deny themselves, &c. You should lay before them what, as Christians, they are called to, and thus convince them, that they are yet far from the kingdom of heaven.

IV. The fourth delusion is, that sinners do not consider the sins they have committed in their thoughts and desires. If sinners accuse themselves, it is, usually, for signal crimes, as actual impurity, theft, &c. But you seldom find them accusing themselves for their licentious thoughts, their indecision, and their attachment to the world and themselves. I have found, that pressing them upon these subjects is an excellent method to affect sinners, and to draw them from their security.

When you meet with a sick man applauding himself, ask him, for example, what he was thinking of when he was praying to God—whether he was not distracted—and whether

he was attentive whilst he was at church?—The generality will answer, *No*. Ask them whether those distractions are usual with him? If they say, *Yes*; ask them further—whether they do not strive to overcome them? If they answer, *No*; you should then assume a serious tone, and tell them that you thought they had some piety in them, but they are very far from it. You must likewise examine them on the *commandments*--and ask them, whether they love God, and think upon him?

Several who are free from *actual lewdness* would be made to tremble, if you were to lay before them that sentence of the gospel, *Who-soever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.* Matt. v. 28. You see, therefore, that it is necessary to insist upon those sins which are committed in thought. You should do this, not only with the sick, but in your sermons.

V. To awaken the conscience of sinners you should make them attentive, not only to such duties as are common to all Christians—but also to the duties peculiar to their calling. Whether, for example, they have discharged the duty of a father, son, magistrate, elders, constables, &c *. You should represent to every sick person the manner in which he has discharged

* The original word is *Jusficiers*, which denotes (as I am informed by a learned friend, who has lately travelled into Switzerland) certain inferior magistrates, usually taken from the higher class of peasants, of which there is one in every parish, whose office is similar to that of our constables; and which I have therefore translated by that word.

his calling. One has sometimes very powerful things to say to fathers, to servants, &c. You should have in view the faults peculiar to the age, the condition, and the sex of the persons you are visiting, and remind them of them. If you are speaking to a young man, make him recollect the faults of his youth. If you are admonishing an old man, remind him of the turn of his age; if persons of the female sex, remind them of slander, &c. Are you visiting a poor man, then put him in mind of envy, jealousy, and cheating, which are so usual to people of his condition. With respect to persons of rank and wealth, you should make them sensible that pride is a temptation almost inseparable from their state; and tell them of that self love, through which they are apt to refer all to themselves, and which is repugnant to piety. And thus of the other conditions, of labourers, mechanics, &c.

VI. In order to sound the conscience well, there is one maxim which you should never forget, and that is, to lead the sick man to the knowledge of his predominant faults. Those faults are the source of almost all the sins one commits. When a sick man confesses himself a sinner, ask him for what he chiefly implores pardon from God—whether he has not been subject to such or such a passion. You will learn from his answers which of them it is. Ask him next, whether he has not paid some attention to certain seasons, as when he received the communion, &c. Whether he did not

correct himself---and whether he made any proficiency?—For on this it is, that the judgment you are to form of his state depends. Make him sensible how many sins, *that* has hurried him into. Anger, for example, what sins does it not produce? Shew him how that draws him into a habit---and that one *habitual* sin is sufficient to condemn him.

On all these means of founding the conscience I shall make one general remark, which is, that you must propose these reflections according to the capacity of those you are conversing with: You should not represent them all to all sick persons. There are many who are grossly ignorant, and sometimes incapable of giving you any answer. You should then confine yourselves to essential points, and put such questions to them as may engage them to make short answers.

LECTURE XV.

SECT. I.

How a PASTOR should proceed with sick People after he has sounded their Conscience.

THE first thing that ministers should do, after they have sounded the conscience of the Sick, is to address to them such counsels, promises, and threatenings, as their necessities may require.

Before I enter on the consideration of these articles, I must tell you one thing which seems not to be ranked amongst the duties of the ministry, but which should, notwithstanding, be never forgotten.

We are called to attend the Sick, principally on account of their salvation; but we ought likewise to speak to them of their temporal affairs *, and indeed we should begin with them. For this purpose I suppose two things.

1. That

* Our church has wisely prescribed it as a part of the minister's duty in his attendance on the Sick, "to admonish them to make their wills (if they have not yet done it) and to declare their

1. That the state of the sick person permits it; for if it does not, we must go to the principal point.

2. That he is tolerably well disposed to do what he ought in that respect; for without that, we must wait till we have put him into a proper disposition for it.

These temporal affairs regard the sick man's family, or his possessions.

I. As to what he should do for his family, you should exhort a father to pray to God for his family and near relations, and to give them his blessing.

You should engage him to exhort his family to piety, peace, and union; and to take all the precautions he can, that peace may reign in his family after his death.

II. With respect to his possessions, there are likewise three things to be done, which you should always have in mind.

1. The first, which is not sufficiently thought of, is to see, whether the sick man is possessed of nothing unjustly, and whether he has no restitution at all to make *.

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their debts, what they owe, and what is owing unto them; for the better discharging of their conscience, and the quietness of their executors." The minister is also allowed to begin with these temporal affairs, if he sees fit, before he proceeds to his spiritual offices with the Sick. This Lecture affords several pleasing instances of a strong coincidence between our judicious author's maxims, and the rules and prescriptions of our established church.

* Our church requires the Sick, "if he hath offended any other, to ask them forgiveness, and where he hath done injury, or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his

You should never visit a sick man without this, though he should be poor. You should even propose this article to people of probity, of whom you are otherwise persuaded. This is necessary, partly for the sake of obliging them to examine themselves upon it, and partly for the sake of public edification ; for if you do not speak of it to every body, those, to whom you do speak of it, will think that you accuse them.

2. You should speak to the sick man about the disposal he should make of his possessions. You should exhort him to act so as not to injure any person, and that after his death there may no law-suit arise through his fault.

3. You should exhort him to apply some portion of his estate to pious uses, provided he can do it without hurting his heirs. You must, however, touch upon this point with a great deal of discretion, lest it should be thought, that our ministers are fond of doing as the priests of the Roman church do, and of soliciting the Sick *.

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his power." For, (as Mr. Wheatley observes) he who refuses to do this, is not a penitent for the injury he has done, but would certainly do more if he had time and opportunity; and therefore he can expect nothing but condemnation from that judge, who knows the tendency and temper of his mind. See the nature and necessity of *restitution*, in a variety of cases, explained and inculcated by archbishop TILLOTSON, sermon 170 and 171.

* Our church prescribes, " that the minister should not omit earnestly to move such sick persons as are of ability to be liberal to the poor." But it is highly requisite (as our author observes) to use great discretion on this point, and never to put a sick person

On the other hand, you should touch on this article in such a manner, and with such circumstances, that the sick man may not imagine that he shall be saved by such donations. A Pastor should also discourage all such donations as have relation to his own private interest. A man may bequeath something for the use of a company, for schools, or the erection of a new church; that would be well: but if he should be willing to leave any thing, for instance, towards augmenting the minister's salary, it would, at least, be proper, that he should not avail himself of that augmentation, but leave it to be enjoyed by his successors. This, I say, on the supposition that the sick man makes this declaration to the minister; for he might do it in such a manner, and with such circumstances, as would secure the minister from all suspicion of interest. There have been some ministers in this country, that took money of dying persons *, but you should ALWAYS BE ON YOUR GUARD AGAINST TAKING ANY THING.

S E C T.

son on such a disposal of his money, or estates, even to charitable uses, as would be injurious to his lawful heirs. Indeed, such improvident donations and dispositions of languishing or dying persons, in this country, have been pretty effectually prevented, or restrained, since the year 1736, by the mortmain statute of 9 Geo. II. c. 36. See BURN, under the word *Mortmain*.

* I am sorry to find, there has ever been cause for a similar complaint against any of our clergy. But about fifty years ago, a writer of some repute said, "I am lately assured, that the city divines are paid for visiting the sick, and I am astonished at it. *Quid non mortalia pectora cogis Auri sacra fames.* JOHNSON'S Vade

S E C T. II.

What must be done for the SALVATION of the SICK.

HAVING thus spoken of their temporal affairs, let us now consider what should be done for the Salvation of the Sick. Either the sick man is of a good disposition, and has lived well, or he has not, and is ill-disposed. Accordingly as he is found in one of these two states a minister's duty must vary.

I. If he appears well disposed, and has lived well, you should exhort him,

1. To return God thanks for all his favours, and particularly for that piety which he has wrought in his heart, and the grace he has given him to live well.

2. Exhort him to repentance, and humiliation before God, through a sense of his sins, which are always but too numerous.

3. You should announce the pardon of his sins by the authority of Jesus Christ, who has given that power to his ministers. This duty is more essential than it is thought; it is one duty of the ministry. This might be proved from the practice of the primitive church. It was never so much as questioned, whether a man should receive absolution.

Vade Mecum. VI. p. 261. note. I heartily wish Mr. JOHNSON's censure may have had any effect in reforming such clergy in this point.

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I remark this, because absolution has been neglected along with auricular confession, which has been justly abolished, as practised in the church of Rome. I do not mean that you should announce the pardon of their sins to all sick persons, but you should speak to them of it, that you may grant it or not. It would be very commendable too, that when you grant this pardon, there should be some grave and solemn circumstance attending that declaration *.

I say, you should announce the pardon of their sins to such as are well-disposed, and this is the only occasion on which you ought to comfort. Then it is you should speak of the blessings of heaven, and represent those grand objects which are the subject of the Christian's hope. But you should rank amongst good people none but those who have lived well. They alone can hope for a share in the merits of Jesus Christ. Besides, we cannot know with an absolute certainty, whether they are

* With respect to the virtue and efficacy of the priest's absolution, the *Papists* have certainly carried their notions to a most extravagant and dangerous height. But have not too many *Protestants*, as well in this country as some others, fallen into the opposite error, and treated this ministerial office with a very culpable indifference and contempt; as if it could be of no use or consequence at all to a sick and dying penitent? Does not our author steer with his usual prudence between the two extremes? Whilst he asserts it to be the right and duty of a christian minister to perform this office, on all proper occasions, he carefully guards against the error and abuse which either the minister, or the sick person may fall into concerning it. As to the different forms of absolution, which have prevailed in the primitive churches and our own, see WHEATLEY on the *Common Prayer*, and BINGHAM's *Antiquities*, b. xix. ch. 2.

well-disposed. There are some marks by which we may discern, whether the Sick are of bad dispositions, but we cannot be so well assured that they are in a state of grace. When, therefore, you grant a pardon to any man, you must only do it conditionally *, and leave him to the judgment of God and his own conscience.

II. Our next business is to consider in what manner you must proceed, when you meet with sick people in dispositions repugnant to their salvation. This is a difficult subject, and I cannot treat of it without distinguishing several different articles. Some sick persons are entirely hardened, others are in a doubtful state, and appear penitent.

* The form of absolution in our office for the sick has been the unhappy occasion of many violent objections and disputes against our church. If it is understood to relate only to the censures of the church, it seems not exceptionable; and thus many have understood it. But if it be supposed to relate to the pardon of God, some of our best divines have expressed their opinion and wishes, that both the minister should explain, and the sick person should understand it, as pronounced not in an *absolute*, but *conditional* sense. See SECKER'S Posthumous Sermons, vol. i. Sermon. xiv. p. 357. and WHEATLEY *ut supra*. Moreover, it is not to be used, except with such sick persons, as have made a *special* confession of their sins, and then humbly and heartily desire such absolution.

S E C T. III.

Of the SICK in a hardened State.

I SHALL begin with what you are to do, when you meet with people in a hardened state. That you may not deceive yourselves in that point, I shall make two remarks.

First Remark. I call those entirely hardened who give no signs of repentance, or who give but very slight ones.

Second Remark. I rank in this number those, who give signs of repentance on some points, and refuse to give any on others. It happens every day, that you meet with people well-disposed in several respects; but if you put them upon some duties, you will find them under the influence of wicked sentiments. Hence it is, that you see some shewing charity towards the poor; without the fear of death, &c. but who are unwilling to forgive. Such people are not in a state of salvation, since perseverance in a single sin will condemn us.

When you meet with people in these dispositions, you must observe these two maxims.

1. You must be very cautious not to give them hopes of salvation; much less must you announce the pardon of their sins. But what you should say to them is this, *That you are exceedingly concerned to see them so little affected—that you are extremely uneasy for them—that*
you

you cannot flatter them, nor assure them of the mercy of God, but, on the contrary, they have reason to fear his judgments, &c. You must pay no regard to the delicacy of the sick person or the by-standers. I say, to the sick person; that you may not be guilty of his blood: with respect to the others, it concerns their edification. They might flatter themselves, if they observed you promising salvation to the impenitent. You should, however, act with prudence, and have regard to the weakness of the sick man; for you might throw him into a state, from whence it would be difficult to recover him. You should not, therefore, proceed so far, unless you have first examined him well. You should, if possible, act in such a manner that he may pronounce sentence against himself. This is no very difficult matter. It is easy to convince him, that he has not lived well. When you have brought him thus far, then ask him, *Whether he thinks himself in a state of salvation? Whether God sent him into the world to live in the manner he has? Whether he thinks there is no difference at all between a good man and a wicked one?* When he shall be self-condemned, it will be easy for you to confirm his sentiments.

2. You must then exhort sinners to repentance. You should represent to them the state they are now in, and that they soon will be in. Lay before them those grand motives which our religion contains. If you succeed, you know what you must do; if you do not succeed,

ceed, you must not, however, abandon the sinner; but when you are at your own house (observe this well) you ought to pray for him, and that in such a manner as relates to his condition. After that, go to him again without being asked; exhort his relations to do him good offices, and tell them to send for you, when he shall be in a fit condition to be visited. There are no other means to bring back people, who have lived ill, into the road to heaven, but a lively repentance; but it is then a very slow work, and there is usually but little to hope.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Sick when in a doubtful State.

LET us now pass on to the second state; in which a sick man's condition may be doubtful, and he may appear penitent.

You must examine the nature of their repentance. According as it appears more or less lively, or sincere, you must give them more or less hopes of their salvation. There are several signs by which you may discover the sincerity of their repentance; but, in order to be masters of them, you must study morality.

One rule, by which you should judge whether their repentance be sincere, or not, is this: To examine whether it only begins then, or whether it had begun some time before.

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When you find that the sick man had begun to repent some time before, this is a good sign, but you should be very clear in this point. You should therefore ask him, *Whether he had reflected upon himself before his sickness, and whether he thought about making his peace with God.* If he says yes, then ask him, *the circumstances of his conversion, when, and by what means God had awakened him.* Get information from the sick man, *Whether he had been well acquainted with his sins, especially his predominant sins, and whether on being acquainted with them, he had exerted his endeavours to overcome them, and had made any progress.* If he satisfies you about all these points, you may hope that he will be an object of God's mercy.

When the sick person has hitherto lived in impenitence, and only begins now to repent, what must be done? If he shews some signs of repentance, you should nevertheless not determine inconsiderately. You should say to him, *I observe in you some good, and some evil, but still more evil than good. You see how your whole life has been spent in iniquity; on the other hand, you shew, at present, some signs of repentance; but such repentance is seldom sincere; it very often proceeds only from the fear of death, and the judgments of God, a repentance which has been always considered by the church as insufficient* *. See GAUSSEN, P. 354.

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* Yet, amongst the Papists, this kind of repentance, which they call *Attrition*, if joined with confession and priestly absolution,

You should not, however, exclude the sinner from hopes of pardon. You may give him more, or less hope, according as he appears more, or less penitent. This practice should regulate you, and convince you, that you ought not to announce the pardon of sins too hastily. What you may do is this, to oblige the sick person to give all possible marks of repentance; as confessing his sins, even in the presence of those who have been witnesses to them; if those sins are public, he should ask pardon for them, &c. Be assured that when a man is truly penitent, the more occasions he has of testifying his repentance, the more joy will he experience. You should oblige the sick to make reparation for their sins, if they are able to do it, and should engage them to renounce those sins, provided they are restored to health. For this end, make them observe the circumstances they are in, the favour which God bestows on them, &c. If they are affected, improve that opportunity for affecting them still more. If then they express a great deal of sorrow, and fear, you should give them some hopes; but never give it to them as you would do to a man who has lived well: this is the fault of Mr. DRELINCOURT in his *Charitable Visits*. He represents to you a man in a hardened state at the beginning of his visits, and at the end he gives

lution, is held sufficient to secure the pardon of God, and eternal salvation. A notion that well deserves the severe censures it has met with from the best Protestant divines. See SECKER'S Sermon. Vol. vi. Sermon. xiv. and TILLOTSON'S Sermon. lxi.

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him absolution. You should never speak to the wicked, as you would to the good.

Sometimes the sick are in a doubtful state; one knows not whether they are penitent, and one often leaves them without knowing in what state they are, either thro' the conduct of the sick persons themselves, or for *want* of *being able* to talk to them. What must be done upon these occasions? You must give them hope in proportion to the signs of repentance they discover. See GAUSSEN, page 358. You should exhort the sick to think upon what you have said to them, and speak to them agreeably to the persuasion you have of their condition. When you meet with the sick in this state, you should leave every thing for the sake of visiting them, and oblige the relations to send for you when the sick shall be able to converse with you.

S E C T. V.

Of the SICK under TERROR.

LET us see what must be done when sick people are in terror. This case is the most uncommon of all. We meet with some sick persons that are alarmed, disquieted, and uneasy; but this proceeds very often from nothing but their disorder; sometimes it arises from melancholy, which is pretty common in this country. In this case you should treat them

with gentleness, overcome their scruples, and have patience with them.

But as to those who are under fear and terror, they are seldom to be met with*. That terror may arise from two sources From the fear of death, and from the fear of God's judgments.

1. Though death is the *King of Terrors*, the sick, in general, do not greatly fear him.

2. As to the dread of God's judgments, and what we call *despair*, it is exceedingly rare; it is most usual for sick people to fall into the opposite extreme; there is more need to alarm, than to encourage them. Nevertheless, if you should visit any that are alarmed, observe what you should do. If it is from melancholy, you should treat them with gentleness: but sometimes melancholy arises from the conflict of a soul unwilling to quit

* Our excellent author seems to have been happy in meeting with so few of these dismal objects in *Switzerland*; but a celebrated divine of this country, most *pathetically* laments the distress of himself, and his fellow-ministers, arising from a contrary experience. "It is our lot, who have the souls of men committed to our charge, to see many of these sad sights. O, my God! what confusion have I sometimes seen in the face of a dying man! What terrors on every side; what restless working, and violent throws of a guilty conscience! And how are we tempted, (who commonly are sent for too late to minister comfort to such persons) I say, how are we tempted to sow pillows under their uneasy heads; and out of very pity and compassion are afraid to say the worst, and are grieved at our very hearts to speak those sad truths, which yet are fit for them to hear! — It is very grievous to see a man in the paroxysms of a fever, or in the extreme torment of the stone, or in the very agony of death: but the saddest sight in the world is the anguish of a dying sinner: Nothing looks so ghastly as the final despair of a wicked man, when God is taking away his soul." — *Tillotson*, Ser. ccxlix.

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its sin; they are disgusted and uneasy, because they are unwilling to confess it. With a little address you may discover what it is that often disquiets sinners. If their fear arises from hence, you should increase it; for you cannot heal them except by repentance. If, however, that Terror proceeds from repentance, and they are excessively afflicted, I have two things to observe to you on this subject.

1. You should encourage such persons in proportion to the persuasion you have of their repentance.

2. Their condition is by no means dangerous; it is a false confidence that ruins men; but “*happy is that man who feareth always!*”

S E C T. VI.

Of SICK PERSONS restored to HEALTH.

ANOTHER case is this, to know what should be done supposing the sick man should be cured, and restored to health. Sickness has two issues, either life or death. It is proper to prepare the sick for each of them. With respect to life, you should never forget to make them promise, that they will live better if God should restore them to health*. If they are people whose state is doubtful, you

* If they can read, it might be useful to put into their hands Bishop GIBSON's excellent *Advice to persons on their recovery from sickness.*

should clearly prove to them, that God cannot be mocked, that they should wish to live in order to make amends by a Christian conduct for the life they have hitherto led.

Many considerations might be laid before them, to wean them from the world; its vanity, the excellence of spiritual riches, of a future life, &c. When they are in health, you should visit them—as we shall observe hereafter.

S E C T. VII.

Of SICK PERSONS labouring under different SINS.

SICK people are not always in the same circumstances: We find them in different conditions, either with respect to the dispositions that concern their salvation, or with regard to their disorder. I shall make some reflections on what you should do in both these respects.

I shall not undertake to point out to you all the conditions in which the sick may be found. Observe, before all things, this general principle, that it is more difficult to lead some sick people to repentance than others. I speak this with a view to the nature of their sins. There are some that are sooner followed by repentance than others. Men are more ready to acknowledge those sins that have been conspicuous by some external actions,—such as drunkenness, impurity, &c. unless they are in a terribly hardened state: But there

there are others that are not known, and are not acknowledged: these are they which are not outwardly conspicuous by any bad actions, such are avarice, pride, dissimulation, &c. It is difficult to bring them to confession who are guilty of these sins. You must take a great deal of pains to discover these things. Many do not think that anger and resentment are great sins. These, however, are usually the greatest obstacle to salvation. For sins which consist in momentary acts are not so great an obstacle to salvation, as those which consist in a fixed disposition, and are committed at all times, and in cold blood. For example, we have more trouble with a rich man whose heart is full of pride and self-love, than with another whose life has been notoriously scandalous: We can sooner bring that man to confession who has stolen another's property, than him who has done wrong to no one, and whose heart is full of avarice. There is need of a great deal of patience with such people.

But I should principally speak to you of those who are guilty of sins they cannot deny. They usually deceive themselves by imagining it sufficient to confess them, and to have some contrition for them, without having any occasion to accuse themselves of other sins they have committed. When you meet with such people, you should represent to them the atrociousness of their sins—but tell them, that such sins are never alone, they are always accompanied with other crimes. *The confession you have*

have just made, you may tell them, *is a proof that you have not piety, that you do not fear God, that you love the world, &c.* You will then see, that you will make them think of several sins. When they are guilty of any of those great sins that are repugnant to regeneration, they are always guilty of a great number of others.

But it is necessary to come to some particular cases.

1. Let us speak of lewdness, you should press them hard who have fallen into it, especially if they have lived in the habitual indulgence of this sin. And as this class of sinners may be found in different states, it is proper to consider them a little. Either their crime has been publicly known, or it has not. If it has been publicly known, and they have confessed it, you should endeavour to awaken sorrow in their souls, and tell them, that they ought to implore pardon from God as long as they live. If it has not been publicly known, or they have not confessed it, tho' they have been accused, you should then plainly declare to them, that they have committed terrible crimes—that they have lied to God, and there is no pardon for them, unless they confess them *publicly* (supposing the case require it) and make reparation. It is a general rule, that absolution should not be given for those sins, except when they have confessed them; and here likewise reparation is absolutely necessary.

Another case is this. If a person has been guilty of this crime, and has not been accused
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in the presence of the church, but has confessed it to a pastor, what must be done? He must keep it secret, lead the sinner to repentance, allow him some time for bewailing his crime, and oblige him to provide for the child, and for the welfare of the person with whom he has defiled himself. But here it should be remarked, that lewd persons sometimes raise so many obstacles to their repentance, that a pastor knows not what to do, and cannot with a good conscience give them absolution. It is of importance to speak of this in sermons.

II. *Injustice.* This subject is very extensive. This general remark should be made upon it, that in order to repair the evil that has been done by this sin, you should *dispose* the offenders to restitution. I have here *four maxims* to recommend to you.

1. You should have regard to the calling and employments of sinners, in order to urge restitution agreeably to their condition of life. Every trade has its peculiar methods of deceit. Observe merchants, artisans, &c. It is proper to represent this to sick persons, especially when their probity is not well established. You should press every one according to his vocation.

2. When a sick man is bound to restitution, it is proper he should make it rigorously to the person he has injured, and a Pastor should resolutely refuse him absolution, if he will not perform that duty, provided he is able to make such restitution. He should be made to repay, not only what he has taken away, but also the interest

interest of it, and the detriment he has thereby occasioned to his neighbour*. It is proper to preach upon this subject. If this were done, we should not see so many people guilty of this sin.

3. When a sick man cannot repay the very persons from whom he has unjustly taken any thing †, you should oblige him to apply that property to some good works. For example, merchants, who sell by retail, as they have cheated many times, they cannot know to whom they should make restitution. They should be exhorted to apply the exorbitant gains they have made to some *pious uses*.

4. Restitution should be made secretly. It is not requisite, that a man should, by making restitution, declare himself a rogue. He may do it by a person unknown, unless he is to make reparation for a *public crime* §.

III. Sinners who have lived in *anger, malice, and discord*, occasion a great deal of trouble; they are the most difficult to be reclaimed. Very often neither promises nor threatnings will affect them. The motives that may be employed are very numerous. I assure you, in general, this is a very difficult case. You should

* “ We are bound to restore the thing, with the natural increase of it; that is, to satisfy for the loss sustained in the mean time, and the gain hindered.”—*Tillotson*.

† In this case Archbishop *Tillotson* would have the satisfaction made to the injured party's nearest relations, or, if none of his near relations be known, he would then have it applied to the relief of the poor, or some other charitable use.—Serm. clxx.

§ Our author's sentiments, both as to *secret*, and *public* restitution, coincide with those of *TILLOTSON*, *ut supra*.

try all kinds of ways. The principal that may be employed are these.

1. You should know how to embrace a proper time. When a sinner has some favourable intervals, you should take the advantage of them. Has he been *disheartened*, you may *renew* your *charge*. Men will sometimes yield, when you the least expect it. When they *recover* themselves, you should express your joy and satisfaction to them.

2. When you are concerned with *haughty* acrimonious spirits, you should never be in a passion with them; for, if once you throw yourselves into a rage, the evil is incurable. When you want to bring about a reconciliation, you should not at first speak to them *point-blank* of your design, but you should prepare them for it beforehand. For example, I would tell the sick man, that *I see him laid upon his bed, ready to depart and appear before God*. I would ask him, *whether he had thought upon death, and had prepared himself for it; whether he thinks that those who go to heaven are happy; whether he does not wish to partake of the mercy of God*. I would insensibly speak to him of the dispositions he should have in order to die well, and then I might enter upon the subject. You would deceive yourselves in thinking that you could immediately lead these people into other sentiments. It is sometimes a great matter, if you can prevail with them to see the persons with whom they have been at variance. To expect from them a perfect reconciliation all at once

once would be too much, you must proceed to it by degrees. But when you perceive them once *moved*, then is the time to speak forcibly; whereas if you had done so at first, you would have ruined all.

S E C T. VIII.

Of SICK PERSONS under different DISORDERS.

AS to the state in which sick persons may be found, with regard to their disorders, you should conduct yourselves with judgment and prudence.

I. *Case.* When disorders are of long continuance, they are, generally, the most salutary, because habits, good or bad, are formed gradually by repeated acts. The reason why you cannot reckon much on the piety of sick people is, that it arises solely from their sickness. But under long disorders they may perform acts of piety and repentance, and the fruits of them are more certain. It is also more easy for a pastor to labour for the salvation of the sick, as he may visit him oftener, and discover the progress he makes in reformation. Thus long disorders are the opportunities that providence affords us for repentance.

II. *Case.* Some disorders are of short continuance. The pastor and the sinner have then but little time. Sometimes the case is so pressing, that you cannot visit the sick more than
once,

once, and you can do things but imperfectly; and unless the sick man has lived well, you know not what to judge of him. What you must do on these occasions is this, you must confine yourselves to essentials, and endeavour to discover his heart on the most necessary articles, according as the state of the sick, and his disorder may permit.

III. *Case.* The sick are sometimes under great agonies of pain, or extreme weakness. I join these cases both together, because they require the same rules. When the sick are in this situation, you should abridge your conversation, and use short prayers. You should also speak to them by intervals, and not in a continued discourse.

IV. *Case.* The sick are sometimes deprived of understanding, either thro' extremity of pain, or a delirium. In that state you can do them no service, or, at best, but very little. If the sick man does not come to himself, his fate is decided. Observe, however, a distinction that should be made here. Either he had some knowledge at the beginning of his disorder, or he had not. If he had any, you may be guided by the sentiments he then discovered. If he had not any, which is the case in apoplexies, you can judge of him only by his past life. A pious minister must be concerned, whenever this happens. In order, therefore, that we may have no cause for self-reproach, we should speak to sinners during the time of their health, lest they, or we, may be taken off by surprize.

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In this case you should always address yourselves to the by-standers, express to them your concern, and exhort them not to suffer themselves to be surprized, but to profit from the example before them. You should then pray to God for the sick person, in the manner I shall have occasion to mention hereafter.

V. *Case.* Sometimes the sick understand what you say to them, but they cannot speak to you; they have only the free use of their judgment. You should tell them, you could wish they were able to speak, and should represent to them the account they are to give to God; and require them to answer within themselves the things you say to them; and to do that in heart and thought, which they cannot outwardly express.

VI. *Case.* You may find the sick person under the agonies of death. You will then be almost useless to him, and should speak to him by intervals. If he is a sinner, for whose salvation you are in pain, tell him that his hour is come; remind him of the sins of which you think him guilty, and exhort him to implore God's pardon for them. If, on the contrary, he is a good man, after you have exhorted him to repentance, you should comfort him, and speak to him of the happiness of them who die in the LORD, of the resurrection and death of JESUS CHRIST, &c.

To all I have said I shall add this last remark, which should make those who are employed in the sacred ministry tremble, that the death
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of a pastor is quite another thing from that of private persons. If the account, that a private man has to give, requires so much exactness, what ought not a pastor to do?—What must be his condition, who has an account to give a thousand times more awful than that of private persons? This reflection should inspire us with great piety and zeal, affect us with deep humility, and fill us with perpetual fear: You should think frequently on these things.

LECTURE XVI.

S E C T. I.

*Of the Importance, Difficulty and Method of
Praying with the SICK.*

I AM now to speak to you of the third duty which ministers are obliged to perform with the Sick ; and that is—PRAYER.

I. The first thing that you should remark is, that this duty is extremely important. This is one of the principal reasons for which a pastor should be sent for, as we learn from St. JAMES, ch. v. 14. *Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, &c.*

When therefore a pastor prays with a sick person, he performs a duty of his office, as much as when he preaches, or administers the sacraments. These prayers may be of great efficacy with God, as St. JAMES says, *The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, ch. v. 16. Our business here is with the prayers to be used with the sick *. You should

* Our church has provided several excellent prayers (besides an exhortation) for the use of her ministers, and the sick ; some of

should therefore perform this duty with gravity and ardour, not with indifference and carelessness, as some pastors do, who consider prayer only as an appendage to their other offices with the sick.

II. This duty is attended with difficulty, it is more difficult to pray well, than to exhort well. But this difficulty arises merely from the want of zeal and piety; it is nothing but the want of devotion that renders the gift of prayer so rare. This want of piety is the reason that we have so great a number of prayers in print, that are nothing but studied discourses, and have so little efficacy. God is displeased at seeing that ministers employed in his service pray with so much coldness. It is impossible to pray well without having piety, and without the frequent exercise of it in private. A man that is actuated by piety, and frequently

of them for *general*, and some for *particular* cases. Yet it has been generally acknowledged, that they are by no means sufficient to suit the great variety of cases that may occur in a minister's attendance on the sick, and that all licensed preachers *are*, (or at least before the Act of Uniformity *were*) allowed to use other forms of exhortation and prayer, as they should think most needful, and convenient: for which reason, (as Mr. WHEATLEY observes) "Bishop *Andrews*, and others, have drawn up offices to supply the defect; though it may be questioned, whether by the *act* for the *uniformity* of public prayers, we be not restrained from *private* forms. At least it were to be wished, that some more copious office was provided by authority, which might take in the various conditions of the sick, for which they who confine themselves to the present order, are often at a loss." This last sentence of Mr. *Wheatley*, I heartily approve, and yet, I humbly conceive, that our ministers are still at liberty to use other prayers and exhortations, besides those the church has provided.

humbles himself before God in his closet, will speak from the abundance of his heart, when he is attending a sick person; he will affect him, comfort him, and penetrate his heart; whilst another, who is a stranger to that pious habit, will make little or no impression. Hence also you may see, how very necessary piety is in ministers.

III. You will observe, that you must not encourage the sick in the opinion, that the prayers of the minister will save them. You should, on the contrary, evince them, that if they do not pray themselves, the prayers of all the world will not save them. It is proper to undeceive people; for many imagine, it is the ministers that are to bring them to heaven*; whereas *every man shall bear his own burden*. When you pray with the sick, you should propose these two things.

1. You should make the sick man pray by your mouth, and express not so much the thoughts you have yourselves, as what the sick man ought to have in his heart.

2. You should, however, pray also for him, both as ministers and christians.

IV. Not only the pastor and the sick should pray, but the by-standers also should be ex-

* Some think, by sending for the minister, when the physician hath given them over, to receive in a few hours such advice and direction, as will do their business as effectually, as if they had minded religion all their lives long; and that a few devout prayers said over them, when they are just embarking for another world, will, like a magical wand, immediately waft them over into the regions of bliss and immortality: but let us not deceive ourselves, &c. TILLOTSON, Sermon. xcv.

horted to pray for the sick. It is their indispensable duty. JAMES v. 16.

V. These prayers should not be long. Length in prayers is never proper, but less so with the sick than on any other occasion. For a man, that is in pain, is incapable of long attention. You may pray frequently with the sick, but you should do it at short different intervals.

S E C T. II.

Of the PRAYERS themselves.

I. **L**ET us now proceed to the prayers themselves, and consider what should be observed.

1. What you should implore from God. You can pray only with two views ; either for the good of the body, or the salvation of the soul.

In the first view, you may intreat God for the sick man's recovery, and a blessing on the remedies : you will pray to God that he would comfort him, strengthen him, give him patience *. But these things you should intreat for,

* The prayers, which our church has provided to use with the sick, correspond greatly with our author's directions, so far as they go ; but they do not extend to such a variety of important particulars, as he justly recommends in prayers on such occasions. To supply this defect a young minister may have recourse to the *Clergyman's Companion*, or some of the other books recommended in the first note on Lecture xiv. Sect. 2. From them

for, only on condition that God sees fit to grant them. Besides, you should not insist too much on this article, lest you should attach the sick man's heart to the world, at the very time it ought to be weaned from it. But there is a case in which you should pray, and that too with great fervency, for the recovery of his body, and make the sick man himself pray for it; and that is, when he is in want of time for his repentance: but you should teach him to pray for it, with a view, that he may make a better use of life than he has hitherto done, and by a virtuous holy conversation make some amends for his former conduct.

2. You should pray chiefly for the necessities of his soul; and, as his sickness will terminate either in life or death, you should first prevail with him to make some vows and promises of living well. In the prayers you offer up, you should express that promise strongly. *O God! (you might say) this thy afflicted servant promises and vows henceforth to discharge the duties of a christian, &c.*

You should then make him intreat for the grace of conversion, that he may be enabled better to fulfil his promises.

them he may select several useful, and some excellent prayers, on a variety of occasions. I cannot say he will always find in them so much plainness, simplicity, and conciseness, as suits well with the great ignorance and weakness of many poor, illiterate people under sickness: but such as appear to him, in any parts, too high and obscure, defective, or tedious and redundant, he should study to improve, by inserting more easy, clear expressions, and making such additions, or abridgments, as they may seem to require.

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With respect to death, you should implore God to grant him grace, and to pardon his sins : but, as there can be no pardon without repentance, you should pray to God that he would vouchsafe to the sick man that grace, and increase it more and more. The sick man's state must here serve you for a rule. You must implore all those graces that are necessary for his soul.

II. In these prayers you should not confine yourselves solely to the imploring favours from God. You should perform likewise some acts of adoration ; thanksgivings, praises, and blessings. A christian should end his life with praising and blessing God. Are you praying with a good man ? Return thanks to God for having preserved him from the corruption of the world. Is the sinner become a penitent ? Thank God that he has brought him back from his errors in time. You should also return thanks to God, for the favour he hath vouchsafed to the sick man, either with respect to his family or his possessions.

III. A third thing, which I have already touched upon, is this—that you should form your prayers in such a manner, as to make the sick man speak ; and that he may speak, as it were, by your mouth. *O God, (you may say) this poor sick man is going to appear before thee ; he is terrified at the sight of his sins ; he implores thy grace, &c.* But you should not proceed thus, except when the sick man has his right understanding and knowledge.

IV. It is not sufficient to pray for the sick alone: you should comprehend other persons in your prayers. If he has a family, you should pray for them, according to their necessities, that God would comfort them, grant them his blessing, &c. You should also remember the by-standers, and entreat God, that he would give them grace to profit from the example before them, to wean themselves from the world.

V. You should accommodate your prayer to the necessities and the state of the sick man. You should not use the same formulary for every person. Those prayers, that are always kept in readiness, are not good in all cases. You should, therefore, form your prayers upon the dispositions you observe in the sick. This would have a great efficacy in exciting you to piety. For it is requisite you should be capable of praying extempore *, since you know not in what state you shall find the sick. But it is proper we should enter into a more particular account.

* I am aware, that many persons of great judgment and piety, in our church, think it not prudent to trust to their abilities in *extempore prayer* with the sick; yet, might not any young minister, furnished with a large collection of well-selected prayers, occasionally venture on such small *extempore variations*, from any of his written forms, as would best suit with the particular condition of the sick, though he might want either abilities, or disposition, for venturing on an entire extemporaneous devotion? Would not this method be a proper and sufficient remedy for the defect and inconvenience, that must often attend (at least in our author's judgment) a scrupulous adherence to pre-composed forms of prayer?

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Suppose, for example, you should find a man well disposed, you should first return thanks to God for it, and implore his pardon for the sick man's sins and infirmities. You should also express the happy state he is in, and the comfortable emotions that a good conscience enjoys. You will observe the delightful hope of that man, who resigns his soul into the hands of his God, and you will form your prayer in such a manner, that it may appear you have hopes of being heard.

If he be a man who has lived ill, what you should do is this: either he gives some marks of repentance, or he does not. If he gives any, you should endeavour to express what passes in a soul, that is conscious of its guilt and beginning to repent, divided betwixt fear and hope; but, however, where hope predominates; you should intreat God to improve them and to bless the exhortations * you have given.

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* Besides the form of exhortation our church has provided, a minister may use a variety of others, and should always study to adapt them to the condition and necessities of the person he is attending. In this point he will find Dr. STERNE's Latin tract of particular use and assistance; for that judicious writer has supplied us with no less than ten forms of address or exhortation, besides some useful hints for drawing up others on different occasions, and then adds these modest, ingenuous, and sensible remarks.—“ *Hujusmodi formulas alloquendi ægrotos paratas velim, non quòd formam in publico visitandi ordine præscriptam, præ iis, aut earum aliquâ despiciam; eo enim judicio, eaque pietate compositam sentio, ut omnibus quas hæcenus vidi jure optimo præferendam existimem; & æquari posse, nedum superari, haud facilis credam; culpæque eos, qui ab illâ ordinariè recefferint. Sed cum in publici ordinis rubricâ indulgetur*

If you find a sick man hardened, you should take great care in what manner you pray for him, lest you keep him in that grievous state. What we say on these occasions, makes far more impresson than in sermons. Here we speak directly to God, and the sick man considers every thing we say as certain truths. Once more, you should be very careful here, for two inconveniencies would arise, if you should pray for him, as for a good man. You would keep him in his security, and you might harden the by-standers.

But what then must be done?—I would say to such a man—I am going to pray to God for you, but I scarcely know what to pray for. Shall I pray that he would receive you into heaven? I do not find you in a fit state for that. That he would grant you repentance. But you are hardened. I will therefore proceed to intreat him, that, as all I have said to you has not been able to move you, he would please to affect you by some more powerful means. On these occasions I would pray nearly in these words. O God! here is a sinner going to appear before thee, he has infinite need of thy mercy; but we are afraid to implore it of thee: that would be praying against thy will, O Lord! What will become of

atur parochis libertas variandi alloquium; cùm omnes & præfertim valetudinarii, varietate delectentur; & demum, cum alloquia eo pressius unumquemque moveant, quo magis illius statui, & vitæ conditioni fuerint accommodata; conveniat necesse est, ut possit parochus visitatis gratâ hâc varietate placere simul & prodesse; atque in hunc finem ut eos variis alloquendi formulis instructus accedat."

him, if thou should call him away? O God! prolong his life, change him, affect his heart, &c.

I have observed, that this would produce an effect, at least sometimes; and that such a prayer would terrify a person more than exhortations.

If the sick man is in a doubtful state, and you have as much reason for fear, as hope, you should use such prayers as I have mentioned. Pray to God to prolong his life, that he may have time for repentance.

When the sick man is in danger of his life, you should pray in such a manner, that he may perceive you think him in danger, and have no great hope of his recovery.

If the sick man labours under great pain, your prayers should be extremely short, and you should implore God to alleviate his sufferings. You should make the sick express his submission and resignation to the will of God, confess his sins, and the punishment they deserve, that how much soever he suffers, it is all but little in comparison of what he would deserve, &c.

When the sick man is deprived of his senses, you should not pray for him, as if he had the free use of his understanding. You should implore God, that he would defer the sick man's judgment, that he might prepare himself for death. If he has given some marks of repentance, you should pray God to accept the efforts he has made. If he has not given any, you should only intreat God to prolong his life,

life, and furnish him with some new means of salvation. You should pray for the by-standers, and do it in such a manner, that they may understand, that they should not put off thinking about their salvation till the last extremity.

If the sick man is at the point of death, you must not pray for him, as for a person that might yet repent; for there is then nothing more to be done. You should express the most necessary emotions on these occasions, according to the knowledge you have of his state.

If he is well-disposed, you should pray for a happy issue, express the part you take in his happiness, thank God for taking him out of this world, and express the delightful hopes of true christians that look for immortality. You should return God thanks for the blessings he had vouchsafed to the sick man during his life, and pray that he would receive his soul into heaven, and his body as a deposit, &c. And if he has not these sentiments, you should satisfy yourselves with recommending him to God by short emotions, and praying for the by-standers.

S E C T. III.

*What a PASTOR should do besides, and after
praying with the SICK.*

BUT when you have discharged all these duties, there still remain four things to be done, which you should always have in mind.

1. Though you are sent for on account of the sick, your ministry should not be confined merely to him, but you should take occasion to exhort the by-standers to profit from the example before them. These exhortations are well taken, and do more good than sermons. You should, above all, embrace these opportunities for reconciling the minds of people; if there have been any divisions in their families, and for remedying other disorders.

2. After this, a pastor should, in his closet, pray for the sick; and so much the more, as they usually recommend themselves to his prayers. He should meditate on their condition in order to affect them, and examine why such, or such a consideration, has not made him seek out all the means of moving him.

3. You should return frequently to the houses of the sick, and that without being sent for. You should not wait, as I have already said, till the last extremity.

4. When

4. When the sick recover their health, you should endeavour to see them again. There are some cases, in which this is an indispensable duty ; above all, when the sick had led bad lives before their illness. You should remind them of the state they have been in, and of the promises they made *. Their return into the world is always to be feared, even in them whom you had put into some good dispositions. It is therefore exceedingly useful to visit them. You may tell them, that if they had died their salvation was not certain ; that if they fall back again into their errors, you will have no more pardons to promise them. You should then pray with them, and in that prayer make them consecrate themselves to the service of God, and renew the promises they had made in their sickness of living a holy life, if it should please God to restore them.

* Besides much useful exhortation of this kind, Dr. Sterne has also advised the minister to recommend and delineate to the sick person, on his recovery a fixed plan of life and conduct, for his future observance ; but as the whole passage is too long to be transcribed here, I must refer my readers to the tract itself, p. 70—76.

S E C T. IV.

What should be done with respect to CRIMINALS.*

IT should first be remarked, that if it is a difficult office to visit the sick, it is still more so to visit Criminals. If we cannot always promise ourselves great success with the sick, much less can we do it here.

I. These people are almost all in the situation of those, who are converted only at the hour of death. They have persevered in their

* Many, if not most criminals, labour under such an accumulated load of misery and guilt, as renders them objects of our pity, as well as censure. For it is surely neither impossible nor improper to have much tenderness and commiseration for the grossest sinners, whilst we utterly reprobate and detest their sins? Is it not therefore a charitable office, highly becoming every christian, especially every christian minister, whose situation admits it, to alleviate the present misery, and promote the future, everlasting happiness of poor wretched criminals, by leading them to sincere repentance and reformation, by every possible method of instruction, exhortation, and prayer? But such an employment is, confessedly, always difficult, painful, and melancholy, and, alas, too often fruitless; and besides, that, which seems equally the duty of many, too frequently becomes the concern of none, and hence it is much to be feared, that the criminals, in most of our county prisons, seldom met with that compassionate attendance, that religious instruction, support, and assistance, which their miserable condition always stood in need of, till, within these few years; when, by the wisdom and humanity of our legislators, particular clergymen were appointed and encouraged to pay them all proper attention. May all who are appointed to that melancholy, but important office, be zealous, and successful in their labours of love, ever mindful of St. Jude's direction, *Of some have compassion, making a difference, and others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire.*

wicked-

wickedness, till they are fallen into the hands of justice. It will be proper, therefore, to apply to them what has been said with respect to the sick, that are not converted till the hour of death. Besides these, we should add further the following remarks.

II. These people are usually without piety and religion. In reality, tho' people are very corrupt, there are few that fall into crimes which deserve capital punishment. When, therefore, you meet with people that are going to be executed, you must not *look for* any religion in them, at least in general.

III. It should be well observed, that the generality of them are under gross ignorance, and without any idea of religion. They have not been instructed in their infancy, and have been, for the most part, brought up like beasts *, and are always growing worse and worse.

IV. There is usually in them a horrid complication of crimes. When they fall into those

* This, I apprehend, is the case with the generality of criminals amongst us, and yet to our great, if not peculiar dishonour, have many been found in that black and wretched catalogue, whose advantages of birth and education should have restrained them from disgracing themselves, their families and religion, by plunging into various crimes, especially that of *Forgery*, on which the laws of this large commercial nation have inflicted a capital punishment: Are not several, (particularly *two* or *three*) of the most recent instances of this kind, sufficient to impress any man of thought and feeling with astonishment and horror, sufficient to put any serious and humble man on his guard, against the various seducements and the first approaches to capital crimes; and, may I not add, sufficient to teach the most confident and secure the excellence of that short *apostolical* lesson:—*Let him, that blinketh he standeth, take heed, lest he fall.*

great crimes, that are punished *judicially*, one may be sure they have been led to them by many others. They are sometimes guilty of several gross crimes, besides those for which they are to suffer capital punishment.

V. Criminals are disturbed and terrified with the fear of death. One very often loses one's time upon them: They are so agitated with the fear of death, as to be void of attention. We have much more trouble to gain them than the sick. God, who is good and wise, is willing that we should still have some hopes of life; this is done that we may be more calm; whereas a determined and certain death alarms men terribly. You should, therefore, endeavour to remove from criminals the fear of death. And as one fear is driven away by another that is greater, you should speak to them of judgment. Here you should exert all the talents you are possessed of, and you will have a great deal of trouble with these people.

These five considerations should convince us, that a great deal of pains is requisite for putting these people into good dispositions. Every thing is found conspiring, as I may say, on this occasion, to prevent repentance, and, therefore, here it is that the zeal of pastors should be exerted. It is now proper to shew you what should be done, that you may succeed with these people; or, at least, that you may have nothing to reproach yourselves with; for you will not always succeed.

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I. Before

I. Before all things, you should, if it be possible, put the criminal into a disposition to listen to you. For this purpose, you should speak to him mildly, insinuating yourselves into his favour, and expressing the concern you feel for his unhappiness. Nothing will affect criminals more than the compassion you shew for them. You should, likewise, procure them some little bodily supplies, and tell them, that you are willing to attend them for their good and advantage, and that you will not abandon them.

II. You should on this, more than on any other occasion, be afraid of a late repentance. On this account, when you know there are any criminals, that are in danger of forfeiting their lives, you should visit them as soon as you can, and apply to the magistrate for admittance into the prison.

III. When you are with the criminals, you should not begin with exhortations, but you should first give them some instructions; for they are almost all in gross ignorance. You should, therefore, give them a summary of the *Christian Religion*, catechize them very plainly, and make them remark the commandments which God has given to men for their conduct, and the relation they have to society; convince them that God has ordained magistrates, and that they bear not the sword without cause. From hence you should lead them to conclude, that Providence has brought them into the situation they are in, to prevent them from perishing eternally, and for their good and benefit.

IV. After

IV. After you have instructed them, you should lead them to repentance. For this end there are two motives, the sin itself, and the punishment it deserves.

1. You should make them sensible of the atrocious nature of their crimes, from the circumstances that attended them, &c.

2. You should shew them the punishments of a future life, which they have deserved, give them a representation of hell, and remind them that they have but a few hours to live, before they are in danger of falling into that gulf. You may, likewise, display to their view some rays of hope.

V. You should endeavour to sound their conscience, and discover the real state of it. This is the more necessary, as you have usually to deal with people whom you are not acquainted with: this is not like a parishioner whom you see every day. You should endeavour to discover whether they are hardened, or whether they have some dispositions which you may turn to advantage. You may ask them, for instance, whether their conscience did not reproach them at all at the time they committed their crimes?—Whether they were not sensible that they were sinning? Whether they used to pray to God? Whether they did not attend *sermons*? Whether they did not apply what they heard? Whether they had never paid any attention to their irregular conduct? The answers they give you will furnish you with hints for what you should say to them. Discourse with

them on their present condition. Ask them, whether they are not afraid of hell, and whether they do not wish to be happy? If they say, *yes*, that is something. I would then ask them, Whether they think that a criminal, a wretch loaded with crimes, can enter into heaven, and live there with the blessed, with angels, &c.?

VI. The repentance of criminals* usually extends only to the crime for which they are punished. For this reason, what you should teach these people is this, that the crime, for which they are under confinement, is not all the evil they have committed; that there are several other enormous sins, of which they are not accused, but for which they must give account to God. The magistrate only punishes what is committed against society. There are many crimes against God of which the magistrate takes no cognizance, but which are, notwithstanding, very great ones. It sometimes happens, that the crime, for which criminals are punished, is one of the least they have com-

* If their repentance be not (as it too often happens) a sincere and godly repentance, the external, but equivocal signs and expressions of it, will, I apprehend, be observed to fluctuate greatly, now decreasing, now increasing, in proportion to their hopes of a pardon, or their dread of suffering death for their crimes: I remember, some years ago, a learned, pious, and benevolent friend of mine remarked, with much concern, this change and fluctuation of temper and behaviour in a poor criminal, who received not, at last, either pardon or reprieve, of which he now and then too fondly indulged the animating, but deceitful hopes. Is it not the part of every true penitent to be equally contrite and humbled, and consider himself as equally criminal in the sight of God, tho' he should escape death or any disgraceful punishment, from the hands of men?

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mitted. This may be particularly applied to thieves.

It is a matter of question, *Whether we do right in putting them to death?* It should seem that we ought not to condemn *simple thieves* to death. You should, therefore, convince these people, that they have indeed committed a great crime, but that the cheating, licentiousness, and indevotion in which they have passed their lives, is far more criminal in the sight of God.

There is one thing which you should make criminals remark, and that is, that great crimes are so complicated, that this ought to raise in them horror, &c.

VII. You should exhort criminals to speak the truth, and to give glory to God, and that in two ways :

1. You should exhort them to confess to the magistrates the things they are examined about. For with respect to what they are not asked, they are not obliged to declare it, unless it concerns the peace of the public, or the interest of some individual.

2. But as there may have been other crimes, I observe, that pastors should privately exhort criminals to confess the sins, of which they may be conscious they are guilty. For as these people are ignorant, they are not able of themselves to settle their consciences, and they have need of a director. Moreover, there are sometimes things which concern the safety of others, and it is proper they should discover them.

VIII. You

VIII. You should fortify them against the punishment which they are going to suffer, and which almost *distracts* them. There are, I think, two ways of doing this :

1. You should represent to them, that the punishment is terrible only in idea, and that the most grievous part of it is the disgrace, and circumstances which attend it. It is certain, that there are few disorders in which men do not suffer more than when they are hanged or beheaded. The pain vanishes in a moment. And, with respect to the disgrace, they may remove that, both in the sight of God and men, by true and sincere repentance.

2. You should dispel this fear by a still greater, and speak to them of the misery of the life to come ; tell them that the pain of their punishment will be over in a few moments, but that in a future life there are punishments which never end. You should tell them, that if they are become penitent, it is good for them to live no longer, since they would, perhaps, fall into some new crimes.

The means by which you may discover, whether criminals are in any degree penitent, are these. If they say they dread the judgments of God—if they do not express too great a fear of death—if they say they are very willing to expiate their crimes by the punishment they are going to suffer ; these are good signs. But you should obviate one prejudice and error of criminals, and which is, their imagining that their punishment makes an atonement for their crimes.

crimes. You should, therefore, convince them, that nothing can restore them to peace and favour with God, except repentance, or a true change of heart. There are several considerations, that may be used for this end: The example of the *penitent thief* *, who said that he suffered justly. One may lead criminals to some good sentiments, by speaking to them of JESUS CHRIST, who was counted a malefactor.

IX. A ninth article regards the exhortations, that should be given them when they are going to execution. The end of these discourses is not to give common-places about the crime in question. There are two things to be regarded, the salvation of the criminal, and the edification of the people; for it is properly in these two views, that exhortations are given. You should, therefore, make him deeply sensible of the horror of the crime. This is to be done either by general reasons, or particular ones. The general reasons are those which demonstrate the atrociousness of such or such a crime. But you should confine yourselves, more especially, to those particular reasons which are taken

* In a judicious form of exhortation from a minister to a criminal Dr. Sterne has introduced this striking example, “*Memineris latronem in cruce pendentem salutem obtinuisse, quod malefactorum serio respuerit, nec dubites, quin & tu veniam à Deo optimo maximo assecuturus sis, si veram egeris pœnitentiam; si quæ hætenus admisisti scelera nunc odio habueris, & ex animo dolueris, quod per ea Deo displicueris, &c. &c.*—*Si hæc, aliaque ejusdem generis officia fideliter præstiteris, infamiam quâ apud homines laboras, ex parte saltem elues: Deum reddes propitium; & salutem sempiternam, aliàs frustra expectandam, per infinita Christi merita sperare poteris.*”

from

from the circumstances of the transaction. One consideration that should never be omitted is this, to shew whither impiety leads people, and how men fall gradually into great crimes; to give the history of the malefactor's life, and shew that he was not brought into his present state but by degrees.

X. Lastly, You should engage the people to pray for the criminal. For this reason it is, that we have a custom of concluding with a prayer, that relates to the subject, and in which we pray likewise for the *prince, mayor, and magistracy* of the place.

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F I N I S.

